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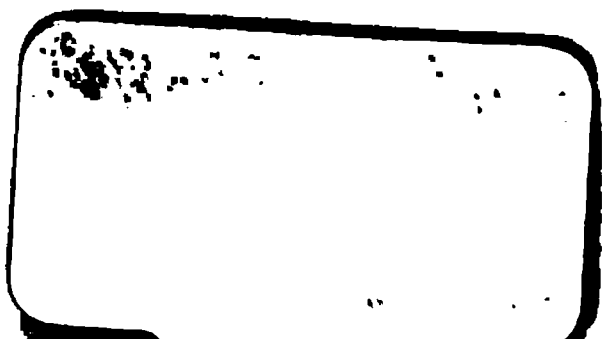
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BENTLEY'S QUARTERLY REVIEW.

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BENTLEY'S

QUARTERLY REVIEW.

I.

ENGLISH POLITICS AND PARTIES.

ON a superficial view of things nothing could be more gratifying to a patriotic optimist than the present contrast between English and Continental politics. At home, a court beloved for its virtues, institutions which give effect with sufficient accuracy to the national will, thirty years' persevering removal of abuses, have made the people so contented and so tranquil that even a tornado like Mr. Bright cannot wake them from their repose. Abroad, the normal aspect of politics is a constant war between the governors and the governed. It is interesting to us, who look safely down from the lofty fastnesses of liberty, to watch the curious cycle of vicissitudes by which the progress of the contest is marked. We see the slender stream of popular discontent, noiseless and sluggish at first, growing every year in force and volume, gathering strength from every act of tyranny and every measure of repression which is intended to dam it in—till at last police regulations and states of siege are futile to hold it back, and it breaks down its floodgates with a torrent before which not only privilege and prerogative but all law and order are swept away. For the moment no sacrifice of dignity or power is too humiliating for the quaking government to make. The unpopular camarilla is banished with alacrity; the sovereign's confessor if he be devout, or the sovereign's mistress if he be gallant, is publicly announced to have retired, and privately sneaks away in disguise. Whatever constitution it may please the favourite madman of the moment to dictate is accepted with affectionate eagerness. No one can be more liberal than the monarch, nothing more enthusiastic for reform than the back-stairs. A troop of unwashed ministers is invested with high-sounding offices and absolute power, and is loaded.

with the confidence and favour of the court. It is not a moment for weighing phrases or cheapening concessions; scruples are scared away by the gloomy spectre of the guillotine in the back-ground. But the time of popular triumph and monarchical dirt-eating is short. The mob of the ignorant and the half-starved to whom the revolution is due, and whom, therefore, its leaders dare not curb, looks upon its emancipation from law as the only solid fruit of victory. They plunge into excesses compared to which the previous tyranny was innocent, and soon bring on the reaction—that dreaded rebound from revolutionary fervour which a revolution very rarely survives. On the wave of the reaction the monarch, complacently swallowing his oaths, floats back to absolute power, followed by the confessor or the mistress; the camarilla and the familiars of the back-stairs resume their places with the feeling of respite with which a man recovers from the gout; the unwashed ministers are consigned to the nearest provost-marshal; and everybody who particularly distinguished himself during the revolution by moderation and humanity is dropped into an oubliette. Then the old system begins again. The old taxes are renewed, the old abuses are reinstated, the old profligate expenditure is restored on a scale more reckless than before. And as the spectacle of misgovernment and waste elicits the first mutterings of discontent, the old engines of repression are brought out. Spies, censors, custom-house indexes are the order of the day: the police become mere instruments of oppression, and the courts of justice become mere agents of police. It is the fated curse of tyranny, as of all other wrong, that in mere self-defence it must constantly increase. Its instruments of repression are in themselves a tyranny. To crush resistance soldiers are required; and heavy taxes and pitiless conscription are the only means by which soldiers can be raised. Thus tyranny begets resistance, and resistance begets tyranny. At last the cup is once more full; the camel's back is broken; the rage and scorn of the sufferers have accumulated to that point that they are no longer amenable to the usual restraints of physical fear; and then the same edifying spectacle of mob excess and court duplicity is played out again for the edification of the world. We seem just now to be standing at a point at which the well-known drama should begin. Experienced calculators are of opinion that the cycle of peace is pretty nearly exhausted, and that disturbances are due. All eyes are naturally turned to France, the traditional volcano of European politics. The Emperor is not inclined to favour any inquisitorial investigation on the part of foreigners into the prospects of his throne. He

has hermetically sealed all the outlets of opinion: he has soldered up the safety-valve by which discontent escapes in harmless grumblings. But what little leaks out rather seems to favour the opinion that his course is nearly run and that the explosion is at hand. The only doubt seems to be, whether, having the alternative before him of eating or being eaten, and not unnaturally preferring the former, he will not try to save himself from the surcharged fury of his subjects by turning it on some foreign foe. His position is indeed one that ought to move the sympathy of those whose hearts melt for suffering humanity. If he stays at home, and is quiet, he will probably be shot; if he goes to war, and attempts to lead his armies himself, he has every chance of being defeated, and consequently murdered; if he has the luck to find a general who can lead them to victory, that general is very likely to dethrone him. M. de Morny is undoubtedly judicious in thinking that no time is to be lost in making his fortune.

There is no small room for self-complacency in the contrast between the din of the tempest rising in the distance and the sluggish calm of our own sheltered haven. In the midst of all these rumours of wars, we are lying in a condition of political tranquillity unusual even in England. It seems impossible, even for the most practised hands, to produce any real excitement, except among those who are professionally political. The complicated manœuvres of politicians have at last resulted in the necessity of a Reform Bill, to save the credit of them all. One of the ablest demagogues we have had this century, on this side of the Irish channel at least, has spared no effort, and shrunk from no falsehood, in order to raise a popular storm around this movement which should drive it from the path of reform into that of revolution. And yet the people are languid, if not indifferent. A few meetings have cheered him, and that is all. That he has set all the newspapers writing about him is scarcely surprising, 'for 'tis their nature to,' as Dr. Watts observes. It is no more than any clever man can do, by making five speeches on an important subject at the dead season of the year. But beyond this he seems absolutely to have failed to do more than give a desperate fright to his liberal allies. The working men appear to have lost their faith in mere political arithmetic. They have a practical sense that the national will is deferred to whenever it is expressed, and that each individual enjoys as unrestricted a freedom of action as is consistent with an orderly condition of society. To remove anomalies may be a desirable employment for scientific legislators, but it will never be the

object of much popular enthusiasm. No doubt this political contentment is the parent of incalculable advantages. It gives a security for the blessings of peace and good government, which is best expressed by the value in the money-market of the English guarantee. And yet, like every human blessing, it has its drawbacks. Popular interest in legislation is the very nervous life of a representative body. The moment that public attention relaxes, legislation begins to flag; Parliament becomes torpid and lethargic, and not only loses all energy for the steady pursuit of a consistent course, but, like the natural body when life is waning, it becomes too inert to expel the poisonous and morbid matter which accumulates in its organization. The tactics of faction begin to prevail. The 'enlightened selfishness' which political economists are so fond of recommending becomes the mainspring of party movement. The vision of approaching place, not the triumph of a principle, is the thought that swells the deafening cheer as the successful tellers retire from the table. Men whose political character is blasted, and in whose honesty their staunchest adherents do not in private profess to believe, are tolerated in positions of pre-eminence from which they would be blown like chaff by the first breath of a popular excitement. The whole proceedings of the legislature are infected by a dishonesty, often skirting, though perhaps never actually passing, the limits of actual falsehood. The result is, that the parliamentary session becomes a great dramatic performance, very imposing but perfectly unreal. Every one speaks the language of public spirit, and every one would be very much scandalized if any speaker should be cynical enough to omit this necessary formality; but a series of secondary motives, the desire for personal advancement, in some form or other, of self or friends, has become, especially with the leaders of the House, the real motive of parliamentary action.

The utter disproportion between the hap'orth of performance which comes at the end of the hogsheads of talk—the strange spell which, year after year, without any hostile division, stifles just when they seem most prosperous the most useful measures, has long been the subject of puzzled comment and very varied explanation. It is quite evident that party is no more in the sense in which it existed fifteen years ago; that discipline is at an end; that the leaders in the House have lost either the power or the will to do anything but fight; and that the only influence they exert is to repress the action of independent members. But it has been attributed to any and every cause except the right one—the insincerity of the leaders whom

public apathy suffers to reign, and the consequent distrust and disaffection of their followers.

In high Conservative quarters, the favourite explanation of the present dead-lock is the 'apostacy of 1846.' We do not intend to present ourselves as the uncompromising advocates of all that was done in that eventful year. Looking back from the vantage-ground of experience, which enables us to treat as facts what were only theories then, we can see that the ultimate victory of free trade was too certain to need the assistance of anything that could bear the semblance of a political manœuvre. We may venture to be wise after the event, and to lay it down now, that if Sir Robert Peel had seen his error sooner, or, if when he did see it, he had removed all ground for cavil by declining to be himself the instrument of the change he had so long resisted, the prospects of free trade would not have been damaged and great political confusion would have been averted. No doubt our present difficulties are aggravated by the great secession which his sudden change of course provoked. He took no trouble to convert his followers: he did not even give them time for a seemly retreat from the language which he had encouraged them to hold at political dinners and agricultural meetings. Unfortunately the class whom he disgusted most were precisely the class that is the most numerous in every party—those who had been too dull to foresee the change, and had therefore pledged themselves the most deeply, and those upon whose brains the conviction, which reached all at last, was the slowest to dawn. The head and the tail of the then Conservative party were irreparably severed. On the one side the brilliant debaters and experienced statesmen who formed the Peel administration were left a distrusted and isolated knot in the House of Commons. Deprived of the ballast which a large following furnishes, floating about with every wave of opinion, they have hung as free rovers on the beam of every party, too fickle to be hailed as friends, too formidable to be attacked as foes. For a dozen years they have been the comets of the political system, regarded by all with mingled fear and admiration, but puzzling the most experienced calculators who have attempted to predict their movements.

On the other hand, the severed tail has not been less aimless or less erratic in its course. Abandoning or abandoned by its natural leaders, it was forced to sally forth into the highways and hedges to pick up new ones. It went into the market and bought such articles of the kind as were for sale,—mostly damaged goods of unprepossessing appearance, which other buyers had rejected, and whose subsequent wear has hardly

made good their original cost. It pounced upon unfortunate country gentlemen living serenely in the complacent discharge of bucolic duties, and designated them for positions for which neither their previous experience nor their progress in the English language had adapted them. The collection thus made was heterogeneous and unpromising enough. When first this scratch crew were set to work, their appearance was so raw that people concluded it must be a practical joke of their noble leader, who was known to have the capacity of taking his diversion out of most sublunary affairs. But in the nature of things, defects of this kind mend of themselves by lapse of time. If a considerable party will only wait, it is certain to gather leaders for itself, whether by developing young talent, or enticing the old to its standard; and as ministries go, the present Government, taking them man for man with the last, would, with scarcely an exception, be very far from making a discreditable figure in the world, if only somebody would give them an outfit of principles.

But there's the rub. It is not so much the lack of men as the lack of principles that is threatening to plunge the House of Commons into an anarchy that will make government impossible. And this, at least, cannot be attributed to the mistakes of 1846. The real cause is that the division of parties does not represent the division of opinion. Whigs and Tories had fought for a century and a half, first the battle of dynasties, and afterwards the battle of classes. The Reform Bill came and closed the long war by giving a decisive victory to the middle classes, to whom power was finally transferred. The Tory party were obliterated, and such of them as remained in political life were compelled to submit to a modification of opinions which practically made them Liberals. But it occurred to Sir Robert Peel, in an evil hour, to take advantage of the panic that accompanied the Reform Bill to form a *permanent* party out of the *débris* of Toryism. The violent language that had been used in the agitation, and the yet fresh memory of the French Revolution, had conjured up all kinds of spectres in quiet people's minds; squires were heard to say with resignation that they supposed an agrarian law was coming, and that there was nothing for it but to submit. Even more sober observers doubted whether the House of Lords and the Established Church could survive the transfer of power. In that crisis, and in the face of such threatening appearances, the formation of a Conservative party was a natural and intelligible measure of defence. But the very title it assumed, and the very nature of the emergency that called it forth, proclaimed it to be only a

temporary resource. The middle classes, the new depositaries of power, valued order, for its money's worth, far too much to risk any violent changes; and, as soon as their feelings were made clear, the Conservative party, as such, had become obsolete, and should have ceased to exist. They were as useless as a *l'évee en masse* in times of profound peace, or the Anti-Corn Law League after the corn law had been repealed. Sir Robert Peel's most natural course, apart from all considerations of ambition, was to abstain from all organized opposition to the Whigs, and to aid them, as far as he could, to maintain their slippery position against the Radicals, who were the real enemies of both: in fact, to do what he subsequently did after his fall in 1846. Or he might have revived the old system of party government, by proclaiming, if he could find it, some organic question in reference to which he differed from Lord Melbourne. Or he might have taken his stand on his own and his friends' personal qualifications, and have appealed to the country to decide whether they or their rivals were the fittest men to rule. But he did none of these things. He preferred to form his new party by the help of the traditions of a party which had perished, and of a policy which all men of eminence had renounced; and when the crisis of the conflict arrived, he brought them into power, on no great organic question, on no mere claim of personal superiority, but on a question of customs-duties, which was supposed to affect the pockets of a class.

The first result of this manoeuvre was brilliant enough to conceal from his contemporaries the fatal consequences of which it bore the seeds. Sir Robert was returned to office with a majority more devoted and more pliable than any minister had enjoyed since the days of Pitt. But the retribution of his error was not slow to follow it. The detail on which he had elected to fight was unfortunate in many ways: men differed widely on it, irrespective of their leaning or their aversion to democracy; and it apparently placed the landed aristocracy in the odious attitude of privileged pilferers, using their class influence to swell their rentals. But this policy was most unfortunate in that he had never thoroughly thought it out, though the incessant stream of conversions might have warned him that traditional opinions were but shifting sands to rest upon. His time came at last, and conviction overtook him as it had overtaken others: his followers—who had certainly been treated with want of judgment, and who believed they had been treated with want of honesty—broke angrily away; and though they could not save the Corn Law, contrived

that it should drag down the government in its fall. Then it was that the *πρῶτον ψεῦδος*, the great original error, of Peel's tactics came fully into view. His Conservative party had never had a policy: what they had been fighting for with so much bitterness was no more than a financial detail. Six years' dreary exile from office followed: and as year followed year, and the country absolutely refused to be ruined, and only throve the more in spite of all Sheriff Alison's statistics, the conviction gradually stole even on the most fervent, that Protection, whether right or wrong, was a hopeless cause to fight for. They clung desperately to their crotchet while standing in bleak opposition, for it was their only remnant of a principle or a policy to cover their naked factiousness; but under the transient sunshine of 1852 their obduracy gave way. With the exception of a few, who were either unconvinced, or disdained at such a moment to confess it, the Protectionists, truer to their party fealty than to their hustings' pledges, joined in a vote which consigned Protection to a niche in the history of human delusions.

And now what was to be done? Protection once gone, they had not a policy nor the vestige of a policy. It was idle to proclaim themselves the defenders of the Constitution when their opponents were not dreaming of attacking it. It was impossible to disband the party, to lay the huge soulless Frankenstein which the great opponent of the Reform Bill had called into existence. The spirit of party, the binding distinctive principle, might have gone from it, but the external mechanism was in the plenitude of its vigour. There it was, equipped with all the material for a great party struggle—a large following, four eager whips, a gorgeous club, a huge subscription list—the remains, splendid even in their ruin, of that magnificent organisation slowly and painfully built up to his own destruction by the masterly hand of Sir Robert Peel. There might be no *casus belli*, but there the troops were, well drilled and passably officered, and, like the troops of Louis Napoleon, fight they must whether there were a cause or no. The recruiting sergeants still filled their ranks, the booty of distant offices still glittered in their eyes, the proud names of past victories adorned their standards and warmed their enthusiasm, and the mere want of a battle-cry scarcely affected the vigour of their charge. It was too late to talk of disbanding the Conservative party. It might have been done in 1834, perhaps in 1846; but in 1852 it was a chimera. Even supposing the organisation in the House of Commons could have been annihilated with a word—Mr.

Disraeli cashiered into private life and short speeches—that inseparable note-book torn from Sir William Jolliffe's hand—Lord Henry Lennox relieved from the labour of supplying perpetual small-talk to the simple but sensitive sheep who own him as their peculiar guide—the jealously-guarded sanctuary of those frowning red granite columns converted into a paradise where Bentinck might smoke with Bright, and the cannon-ball lie down with the cockney—still the work of destroying the party would be but a quarter done. The leaders who speak, and the followers who cheer them, and the clubs where they dine, and the whips that soothe their irritated nerves, are but the superstructure of a party organisation. Much more had been created by the voice that said, 'The battle of the constitution must be fought in the registration courts.' The conflicts by which the Conservative party had been matured during the long ten years of its infancy, had been fought before every revising barrister, and upon every hustings. The party division of Tory and Whig had been revived under the names of Conservative and Liberal in every corner of the kingdom. And what is a party in the House of Commons, is very like a faction among the constituencies. The mass of men belong to this side or to that because they have voted for it once, and do not like to change; or because their fathers did so before them; or because some point in the programme of their party happens to suit their interest; or because it did so once, and they are not going to be ungrateful. The electors who vote from any intelligent knowledge of the issues in dispute are a very select *corps*,—all the more admirable for their rarity. And in proportion as their fidelity is unreasoning, it is staunch. Nothing secures a man's loyalty to his opinion like an incapacity to understand the arguments that are employed to refute it. Moreover, it is one result of 'the battle in the registration courts' that there is scattered throughout the country an army of persons, whose interest it is to see that whatever happens to party principles, party feuds shall be kept up. The Conservative attorney knows that if party contests cease his occupation is gone: and his Liberal brother, who agrees with him in nothing else, is in this at least like-minded. And the aggregate of attorney power available throughout the country is positively enormous. It is a well-known and most true saying of Mr. Henry Drummond's, that in these latter days we are not priest-ridden, but attorney-ridden. In a town of moderate size, the attorney is an actual tyrant. His familiarity with all the secret deeds and misdeeds of his fellow-townsmen, the pecuniary transactions which pass through his hands, the opportunities of giving advice

which are open to him, place him in an admirable position to bring down a cauldron of hot water about the ears of any one whom he is inclined to spite. The result of all these combined causes is, that whatever shifts and changes may happen in the airy regions up above, down below the demarcations of party are solid and immoveable. Gentlemen in the House of Commons may modify, intrigue, fuse, reconstruct: they may form alliances, coalitions, or conspiracies; but the elector below remains perfectly insensible to their kaleidoscopic evolutions. He only knows that he has always been a Blue or an Orange, and a Blue or an Orange, unless reasons of a very solid and substantial character be shown to the contrary, it is his intention to remain.

Thus the situation of the Conservative party in the winter of 1852 was the most hopeless dilemma that could be conceived. They were too large and too powerful to be dispersed, and yet they had no principles for which to fight. The opinions of their leaders were not, in the main, unsound, or materially differing from those held by the generality of thinking men in the country at large; but the flaw in them for party purposes was precisely the fact, that they were common to both sides of the House; and if they belonged to any party it was not to the Conservatives but to the Whigs. They were precisely those moderate progressive principles, hostile to abuses, but equally hostile to mob government, which had been professed by the Whigs of 1832, and to which the Whigs of 1852, if they were let alone, were perfectly willing to adhere. These principles, therefore, however well they might turn the periods of an election address, were perfectly worthless for the purpose of opposing Lord Palmerston or Lord Aberdeen in the House of Commons; and there were no others. In the absence of this indispensable necessary, it is difficult to say what would have been the best line of action for the Conservative leaders to have pursued. The only honest course they could have taken was to have hampered nobody, to have forwarded, by all the means in their power, both government and legislation, and to have bided their time, trusting that they should secrete new principles, as lobsters who have been maimed secrete new claws, by hiding themselves for a season, and sitting still.

Unfortunately, hiding himself was precisely the process to which Mr. Disraeli's taste was the most decidedly averse. If fortune had favoured him with any kind of banner to fight under, no doubt he would have gone down to posterity as the champion of some sacred cause; but fighting without a banner was infinitely better than not fighting at all. Accordingly, he adopted

exactly the tactics which were the best calculated to bring most prominently into relief his party's utter lack of distinctive principles. He did not state any broad grounds on which he differed from the governments of Lord Aberdeen and Lord Palmerston, and in respect to which he should oppose them whenever their measures fell within its scope. There was nothing in his professions of political faith, so far as he made any at all, that should have disqualified him from acting as their most ardent supporter. But, nevertheless, he was a more active and inveterate adversary than Lord Eldon himself could have been. He harassed them with an incessant, never-sleeping opposition, with objections and attacks drawn from every school of political thought, and urged, whatever the question and whatever the crisis, the moment he saw signs of wavering in their ranks. No matter on what side the Government exposed itself, whether it was by being too liberal or too conservative, Mr. Disraeli was equally ready with the biting speech, and, if occasion served, with the damaging division. The advertisement duty and the newspaper stamp duty, the alleged hostility of the Government to the Italian Liberals, or their refusal to delegate executive power to a Committee of the House of Commons, were weapons as serviceable in his dexterous hands, as their assaults upon protestantism or their coquettings with reform.

But if his party lost credit by his policy, they lost still more by his allies. The Liberal party, who were nominally opposed to him, were anything but a homogeneous whole. If, as between the Conservatives and Whigs, there was a division without a difference, there was among the Liberals themselves a most momentous difference unmarked by any division. All the varied elements on the ministerial side passed as their supporters, received their whips, ate at their clubs, and appeared at their much-sought-for parties. But they were split asunder by a difference of opinion as vital as any that ever divided politicians. The Whigs have always been eminently hierarchical. They are great enthusiasts for liberty; they will endure fraternity so long as it does not involve inviting their 'brothers' to dinner; but equality they never could abide. They have always believed in the right of the intelligent minority to govern; and have never, in conviction at least, acquiesced in the numerical theory of government, according to which the side which counts most noses governs property, intelligence and all. But nature, ever sparing of her gifts, having granted them soundness of views, has refused them the courage to speak them out. They have no real sympathy with the

politicians who proclaim 'that a man has as much right to vote as he has to breathe.' Allies, however, were necessary, and the virtue of the Whigs was weak. But they have not yielded without much inward struggling and many an *arrière pensée*. They have watched with heartfelt uneasiness the stubbornness and the growing influence of those to whom they had given political existence. The same imperious need of place which made them once seek such ill-omened aid, has made them loth to resign it; and, under pressure of their new alliance, they have made step after step in the democratic direction, with as much grace and goodwill as the Eton fag who is made to creep down the bathing-steps into the cold Thames stream by the application of the toasting-fork behind him. By this time they are evidently beginning to feel very much as Vortigern must have felt when he first learned that Hengist had ulterior intentions; or, rather, as Vortigern would have felt if he had learned, at the same time, that the Picts had ranged themselves under Hengist's banner. For this has been the character of Mr. Disraeli's recent policy. Whenever a Radical notability, whoever he might be, Mr. Roebuck, or Mr. Gibson, or Mr. Cobden, gave the signal for a charge into the Whig flank, Mr. Disraeli has always been ready to assist, if he could only overbear the indignant murmurs of his recalcitrant followers. We are pronouncing no opinion as to the merits of each particular issue. The general bearing of Mr. Disraeli's tactics is clear enough, without entering into any such considerations. It was to buy the Radical support in the enterprise of ousting the Whigs.

Now if Conservative has any meaning at all, it means anti-Radical. The Radicals are the only inheritors of the revolutionary views which the Conservative party was set up to counteract; and the two can no more act together, if both are honest, than a weasel can act with a rat. Hostility to Radicalism, incessant, implacable hostility, is the essential definition of Conservatism. The fear that the Radicals may triumph is the only final cause that the Conservative party can plead for their own existence. It is as impossible that the country should draw any other inference from their systematic co-operation, than that the combat has ceased to be a fight of principles, and is only a corrupt touting for place. The 'great Conservative party'—very unjustly as regards the main body of them—has come to be looked on as nothing better than a wandering horde of political marauders, ready to sweep down on the fertile valleys of office from whatever quarter and in whatever company might give the most abundant promise of success. Their proceedings, since they have been in office, have not been calculated to mitigate

the impression. That they who were first formed, in the panic of the Reform Bill, out of the *débris* of its opponents, who rose to power on the wave of its reaction, who have since steadily resisted every proposition of Reform, should now be the authors of a measure to carry its provisions further, is enough to make one think that Lord Castlereagh's phrase about 'turning one's back upon oneself' is scarcely an Irish bull. It is as if the *Avvocato del Diavolo* should one day astonish the Court of Cardinals by getting up and proposing a saint of his own.

For themselves, a more suicidal policy could scarcely have been conceived; for in this country a reputation for sincerity is worth far more, perhaps because it is far more rare, than any amount of parliamentary cleverness or brilliancy of eloquence. But it has worked a far wider evil. It has largely contributed to engender that distrust of all public men which has reduced parties to an infinity of sections, and left the House of Commons a formless chaos. The Whigs have never been eminent for the honesty of their professions: they have always lived, like pawn-brokers, on unredeemed pledges. They have always looked upon their Radical friends as Jew usurers, to be put off with bills of reform drawn at a long date, the interest being paid in places in the meanwhile. Hong Kong for Sir John Bowring was rather a usurious demand; but when it came to giving the colonies to Sir William Molesworth, the interest had approached to cent. per cent. This frail tendency, however, has grown manifestly worse, since the late tortuous policy of the Conservatives commenced. As soon as it became clear that the parliamentary struggle had resolved itself into a competition for the confidence of Mr. Roebuck, the Whigs were not the men to be outbid. Even Lord Palmerston, who was known to hate reform as he hated sin, or rather worse, declared himself, amid the morose silence of his followers, an enthusiastic believer in 'a just and moderate measure.' Nobody placed the slightest reliance on his professions: they were the joke of the House of Commons. Their only effect was to add one more to the list of public men whom nobody would trust. Men's faith in Mr. Disraeli had become more and more negative at each turn of his serpentine career; Lord John Russell had finally disposed of his character in that eventful year in which his abandonment of office was the death of one ministry and the salvation of another; and Lord Palmerston completed the triumvirate.

All confidence in leaders has been for some time at an end: the demoralization of the House of Commons is complete: its moral code is lower than that of any other association of gentle-

men in the kingdom. Not only do the speakers stoop to deceive, but the hearers accept it as a matter of course that they should be deceived. Statements of fact, professions of opinion, bursts of feeling, have come to be looked upon as mere counters in the political game, and he is admired most who plays them the most cleverly. That what the three or four leaders say can be a sincere reflex of what they think, is an idea that never enters the head of anybody but a county member. When Lord Palmerston, in his character of the man of God, appeals to the Day of Judgment or some theme equally solemn, a broad grin steals over the five hundred listening faces. When Lord John Russell closes a powerful speech with one of those bursts of fervid patriotism in which his genius occasionally gleams forth, the only observation among members is, 'How cleverly Johnny did it to-night! How determined he is to have the Government out!' Mr. Disraeli may make a lucid statement, which a stranger might think was a statesmanlike exposition of his convictions; but the members only say to each other, 'That's a new line! what can he be after now? Who does he want to catch?' Sir James Graham once appealed to the House to trust him on the strength of his five-and-thirty years' character, whereupon Mr. Drummond was not afraid to get up and remark that, whenever he heard a man appealing to his character, he thought it was high time to look after one's pockets.

No doubt this universal mistrust considerably overshoots the mark; but the House has only learned it by dint of repeated lessons. Nor does it apply to the statesmen of junior political standing. Mr. Henley and Sir G. C. Lewis owe their high position in the estimation of the House at least as much to their reputation for honesty, as to their great intellectual power. But the effect of this mistrustful temper, whether well justified or not, is that every man fights for his own hand. No one cares to serve zealously under a leader; for no one knows to what cause each leader is really bound. The day of working majorities, and, therefore, of anything like systematic legislation, is at an end. When members are actually in the House, the importunities of whips and the pressure of social influences, may make them vote according to their party; but nothing will insure their attendance except the zeal which confidence in their leaders alone can give. It is worth while every now and then to sacrifice a crotchet, or even a night's rest, in order to uphold a leader in whose firm fidelity to your most cherished principles you thoroughly believe. But to sit up till two in the morning, and to vote against all your own opinions, merely for the luxury of seeing this or

that elegantly-shaped back on the Treasury Bench is an amusement, the charm of which is apt to pall after a time. Members have pleasanter places to go to than those dreary, dreary green benches, or that odoriferous library; sweeter atmosphere to breathe than that compound of human carbon and Thames exhalations; more savoury food to eat than that greasy gutta-percha which Mr. Bellamy dignifies with the name of beef. Men will not work gratuitously unless they can distinctly see the objects in behalf of which they are working. Honest leaders, who will state their views plainly, and whom their followers can trust rather to renounce office than to palter with their convictions, are the political necessity of the day. So long as confidence is cold, there can be no working majority; legislation is sluggish, capricious, uncertain; Government is Government only in name; a statesman is considered to be a man with a license to have a more elastic conscience than his neighbours; and the House of Commons comes to be looked upon as a huge machine for grinding out insincere talk, and earns, not the respect, but the derision of the people.

It is this chaotic, unorganised, capricious mass, looking upon politics as a game of skill in which office is the only stake, treating a party division as a means of excitement which holds a middle place between a horse-race and a thimble-rig, that is called upon to face one of the most difficult crises the country has been yet summoned to go through. Foreign politics are gloomy-looking enough. Europe is a magazine of gunpowder; France the slow-match which a breath may kindle. Everywhere, in the old world and the new, the materials of explosion are rapidly accumulating. The expansion of new nations, the convulsive dissolution of old ones, the struggles of freedom against despotism, the struggles of nationalities against treaty partitions, are elements of disturbance which any trifle may rouse to action. The Emperor of the French, pursued by a destiny which crimes like his are certain to invoke, finds it perilous to act and doubly perilous to stand still. It will be a terrible thing for Europe if he should realize too soon the desperation of his position. A potentate 'running a muck' with half a million bayonets at his command will be a dangerous spectacle for the bystanders.

But it is evident from the tremulous oscillation of his policy that he is not insensible to the dangers which are thickening around him. It is a condition of his safety that he should be incessantly doing something, and yet it would be certain destruction to him to do too much. War is dangerous because it would exhaust his treasury and blight his slowly

reviving commerce. The chosen of the people may be pardonably indifferent to the sufferings of the *bourgeoisie*, who are always supposed to be grinding the proletariat; but it unfortunately happens that a failing *Bourse* implies a starving Paris mob. On the other hand, the terrors of peace are no less real. The Emperor is piously convinced that 'Satan finds some mischief still for idle hands to do;' and that unless the thoughts of his gallant Prætorians are supplied with dreams of glory, they will betake themselves to domestic exploits fatal to his repose. Soldiers off duty often find it hard to fill up their spare time; and if, after the day's work is done, and as many civilians have been insulted and as many editors pinked as is necessary to the vindication of military honour, it should occur to the chattering idlers of a French camp that a military monarchy might as well have a soldier for its head, the consequences might be more serious than even a drained exchequer or a blighted commerce. If the reveries of African veterans should chance to rove among bygone scenes of gallant exploit, when soldiers were not treated as a cross between the butcher and the policeman, the honoured memories of Cavaignac, Lamoriciere, and Changarnier, now dead or pining in exile, may kindle burning thoughts of indignation and shame dangerous to a sovereign whose title has no voucher but the sword. The newspapers, too, cannot always go on chronicling the largest turnip that has been seen for years, or inventing harrowing tales of lovers' woes and charcoal suicides. Manacled and broken-spirited as they are, they must have matter to fill their columns; and they can only be kept off domestic lucubrations by an ample supply of foreign imbroglios. Unless they are incessantly diverted, the thoughts of Frenchmen will brood on the miseries of France. Consequently the Emperor is obliged to maintain a condition of things, which is a middle term between peace and war—a constant simmering of disquietude—an ever-renewed programme of unprincipled aggressions which it is never intended to carry seriously into execution, but which suffice to engross the thoughts of the turbulent, and terrify the peaceful into submission. He is very much in the position of the celebrated French Professor of Chemistry, who, when his audience entered the lecture-room one day, was discovered standing at his desk and stirring some mixture in a crucible—a mixture which, he informed them as soon as they were seated, was so curiously explosive, that if he left off stirring it for a single instant the lecture-room and all whom it contained would be blown to atoms. If the Emperor's foreign policy shows an activity never

ceasing and yet strangely resultless, it is because he is doomed to go on stirring and stirring without a moment's peace, if he would avert the explosion that is ever threatening his throne. This is the true key of his recent policy. He knows his own interest too well to wish for war, though in his anxiety to impose on his loving subjects he may invoke the fiend once too often. His threats are intended to be threats, and nothing more. If, in addition to occupying his own people, they have the additional advantage of frightening his rivals, so much the better. But to avoid the danger of irritating them beyond endurance he is careful to insult a different neighbour every time. It was our turn last autumn: it is Austria's turn this spring.

There can be no doubt that the proceedings in the matter of the 'Charles et Georges' had very little connection with the real merits of the case. The only pretext under which the French government have finally protested against the punishment of the slaving merchant-captain, was that there was on board his vessel a delegate, selected by the colonial government of Bourbon to watch that merchant-captain's proceedings. They might have continued to rely on the pleas that the ship was not in Portuguese waters, or that the slave-dealing was sanctioned by a sheik who had been authorised by the Portuguese governor; but the value of these pleas seems to have been damaged in their eyes by the trifling difficulty that they were false in fact. They relied almost exclusively on the presence of their delegate. Now it is an old maxim of international law that where a ship of war is, there is the State to which that ship of war belongs, and that one is as inviolable as the other. But the new reading of this doctrine appears to be, that wherever there is a delegate of the French government, there is the French empire. The pretension, that the presence of a mere tidewaiter—for he seems to have been no more—confers on the ship in which he sails, and on every man of the crew which belongs to her, in any territory, under any circumstances, and in spite of any crimes, the inviolability of an ambassador, is so monstrous in its consequences to the police of the world, that it would be impossible for any maritime nation to submit to it. Even if it can be logically deduced from any current juridical maxim, it would be of that extreme legality which the proverb tells us is the extreme of lawlessness. But any power really in earnest to crush the slave-trade, would have gladly acquiesced in the punishment of a slaver, even though it had been accompanied with some of those irregularities which, in the present confusion of slave-trade law, it is almost hopeless to avoid. It

was not, therefore, the merits of the case which brought the two French ships of war to the mouth of the Tagus.

On the other hand, we cannot accept the view that the Emperor's chief object was to irritate England. The aim of the manœuvre was purely domestic. It was necessary to 'keep stirring' the public mind of France, and the object was to produce the maximum of complacency at home with the minimum of resentment abroad. Whether the Emperor thought that England would take up Portugal's cause as her own, or whether he believed we should stand aside, is not quite clear. Probably he fancied he could manage to represent his proceedings in France as a triumph over England; and, at the same time, to convince the English cabinet that England was not concerned. The immediate abandonment of the Regis system of immigration is certainly a proof that an actual quarrel with England was not what he was aiming at. The selection of a weak nation as the subject of an achievement that is to re-burnish a nation's tarnished shield is no novel diplomatic device. We do it sometimes ourselves. When Lord Palmerston had cringed to America and France till his knees were sore, he squared up gallantly to the redoubted Yeh, to prove his enthusiasm for the honour of the British flag. Our present ferocity against Mexico seems to indicate an uneasy consciousness that we have been kicked. Sheridan rather foreshadowed the national policy of England, when he made Fag, after having been snubbed by Captain Absolute, take it out in cuffing the stable-boy. Whether we are amenable to this charge on the present occasion, whether we were really treated with the indignity in the Portuguese affair which is suggested by our valiant tone towards Mexico, it is not easy to determine. On the one hand, the Portuguese own that they asked for no more than our good offices; and the ambassador in England in applying to Mr. Fitzgerald for them, stated distinctly that no more was needed. On the other hand, the broadest hints were given to Mr. Howard, who throughout displayed the better part of valour. It is clear that any judgment of the conduct of the English government must turn on the exact character of the request preferred by Portugal. It may be our duty under treaty obligations to protect poor weak Portugal from the bludgeon of the power which sustains itself by acting as the highwayman of Europe. But if an old lady being asked peremptorily for her purse, chooses meekly to present it, without calling 'police,' she has no right to complain of the inefficiency of the constabulary.

The case of the 'Charles et Georges' is but a passing complication. If we have bought by it the bloodless abandonment of

this new whitewashed slave-trade, humanity has made a priceless gain, even if our national dignity has suffered something of a loss. But the last enterprise into which the Emperor has been led by his desire of appearing to his own subjects to be the arbiter of Europe, is a crime of whose results his own reign may not see the end. It is a terrible thing to fan into a flame the embers of turbulence in a land where for centuries they have never been extinct. Whatever other benefits Italy may have conferred on the world—and we have not, of late years, been suffered to forget them—she has been the temptress and the demoralizer of the military powers ever since the days of Charlemagne. The various dynasties of Germany and France have squandered blood and treasure for the possession of her fertile plains and wealthy cities as keenly and as vainly as ever alchemists toiled and spent in search of the philosopher's stone. How many European wars have had their origin in an Italian dispute! How many gallant armies have rotted on those pestilential battle-fields! Italy has brought on the nations around her the curse which always attends the neighbourhood of a rich and easy prey. Like the bequest of an estate of doubtful ownership, its golden hopes have produced nothing but loss. The litigation of centuries has only ruined the litigants, leaving the issue as undecided as before. To have reopened the quarrel, to have disturbed the settlement of 1815, which, whatever its faults, at least was better than an intermittent war, is one of the most calamitous of all the legacies of evil which posterity will associate with the name of Napoleon the Third.

In reference to the Italian question, we are fortunately in no danger of doing injustice from ignorance of his grounds of action. He has so far departed from the tradition of cabinets as to give them to the world, while his negotiations are still in progress. He may indeed be held accountable for all the warlike language that during the last two months has paralysed capital and dried up the springs of enterprise throughout Europe. He has placed the French press under the tutelage of his officials, and therefore he must accept the responsibility of its misdeeds. The jealous vigilance which detected a tone of criminal violence in M. de Montalembert's gentle irony, has slept while the French press has teemed with incendiary articles and pamphlets. But he has given them more than a negative support. By a pamphlet composed under his own eye, he has helped to stir up the warlike passions of his people. The pamphlet, 'Napoleon III. et l'Italie,' is peculiar as a state paper for the wolf-and-lamb style of its argument, and its cynical indifference even to the appearances of justice. The Italian policy of Austria

has no lack of weak points. The occupation of Rome is a gross violation of international law ; and the government of Lombardy is rigorous and merciless in the extreme. But the occupation of Rome is too tender a subject for a French pen. As far as the stiletto can be looked upon as an expression of popular feeling, the French are not more popular in the character of protectors than the Austrians. Nor could the Emperor afford to be too eloquent on the subject of tyrannical government. He does indeed, say—

‘To ask Austria to exercise a milder and more liberal rule in Lombardy, would be simply to ask her to commit suicide. It is evident she cannot maintain her rule in Italy, except by the strong hand. Every atom of liberty conceded by her to that conquered country would be made use of as a weapon towards enfranchisement:’

which is as much as could be reasonably expected from the author of the ‘Loi des suspects.’ But the gist of the pamphlet is the cry of nationality. Or rather it attempts, after the fashion of many continental sophists, to confuse the cause of freedom and the cause of nationality by successively drawing its arguments from each. ‘The abuses of Naples and the Papal States—so runs the pamphlet—are crying ; therefore it is expedient to drive the foreigner out of Lombardy, and keep Italy for the Italians. No doubt the tyranny of Naples and Rome does so far depend on the occupation of Lombardy, that if Austria were no longer an Italian power, she would not care to furnish the lavish aid without which neither the Papal nor Neapolitan throne could stand. A tenure by conquest must be a despotic tenure ; and despotism will not patiently endure the contagious neighbourhood of freedom. The Italian friends of freedom are right to single out, as their great enemy, the Austrian domination in the south of the peninsula ; and to look on her anxiety for her Lombard possessions as her motive for maintaining that domination. But let them assail the evil where it actually exists. If they are strong enough to strike at her in Lombardy, where she rules according to treaty, let them first overthrow her in the Roman States, where she exists in defiance of treaty. And if they think that when they have reconquered Lombardy they will be united enough and persevering enough to maintain it, they will, at all events, be able to guard Rome from the lawless intrusion of the Austrian soldier. But if they are unequal to this easier task, it will be madness for them to undertake the heavier. If they cannot shatter the foreign abomination which the public law of Europe condemns, assuredly they will fail in an assault on the rights which that same law protects.

But the pamphlet admits, or rather its main aim is to prove, that the Italians unaided cannot reconquer Italy. They will need foreign aid. In this difficulty, the French empire, with its usual disinterestedness, is prepared to step forward, trusting to God, as the pamphlet piously adds, to give it a large share of worldly glory for its pains. But the aid must go further than one campaign. The Italians must not only gain a triumph, but they must maintain it. Even very powerful armies may be forced to recoil at the first shock of a national revolt; but the reason why popular risings are so often transient in their results is, that they are followed by a lassitude almost equal to the first enthusiasm. If the Italians need French aid to drive the Austrians beyond the Alps, they will need it still more to keep them there. In short, the infantine nationality of Italy, which has been theoretical for some ten centuries, and is now for the first time to be practical, will need, during its first tender years, to be nursed and cherished by the gentle hand of a French protectorate. The young cabinets of the new confederacy will need the constant advice of French residents: their immature strength will require the friendly prop of fraternal Zouaves: French law, especially the criminal portion of it, and possibly the loan of a few cells at Lambessa and Cayenne, will be needed to secure the blessings of order to the nascent communities. In fine, if Italy does not become a French province, the difference will be more nominal than real. No doubt, nationality will be carefully preserved—that is to say, there will be nominal kings earwigged by French diplomatists, and nominal governors overawed by French garrisons. But will the cause of freedom have advanced? Will the substitution of one despotism for another repay the calamities of an European war? Is not a change from Austria to France a descent rather than a rise in the scale of freedom? Liberty may be sickly and stunted in Austria, but it is not dead as in France. The Vienna press may be shackled, but at least it is more outspoken and independent than that of Paris. Journalism trained to accept its opinions from a bureau, poor artisans secretly spirited away to a prison in a poisonous jungle for words lightly dropped at a café, are developments of freedom which exclusively belong to the monarchy of universal suffrage. Austrian Italy will rue the day when she exchanged even her present condition for the gilt sham of nationality and the leaden realities of Napoleonic rule.

It is very necessary for us in these days, when the sympathy of England is appealed to on all sides by false champions and by true, to draw sharply the distinction between the cry of freedom and its specious modern counterfeit, the cry of nationality.

Freedom is attainable by all nations, and as they slowly rise to its level will confer equal benefits on all. The triumph of nationalities, the uprooting of all ancient landmarks, and the splitting up of mankind into a multitude of infinitesimal governments, in accordance with their actual differences of dialect or their presumed differences of race, would be to undo the work of civilisation and renounce all the benefits which the slow and painful process of consolidation has procured for mankind. For England it would be a return to the days of King Stephen; for France it would be to renew the kingdom of Provence and the kingdom of Navarre, and to give independence to the Breton and the Walloon. Germany must give up the Frisian and the Vend; Spain must emancipate the Moor and the Basque. It is the agglomeration and not the comminution of states to which civilisation is constantly tending; it is the fusion and not the isolation of races by which the physical and moral excellence of the species is advanced. There are races, as there are trees, which cannot stand erect by themselves, and which, if their growth is not hindered by artificial constraints, are all the healthier for twining round some robuster stem. We flatter ourselves that India, and Ireland, and the Ionian islands are better governed under our rule than they would be if left, as Mr. Gladstone or Mr. Bright or Mr. O'Brien might advise us, to their own independent sagacity. The truth is, that the cry of nationality is as often a cry of selfishness as of sentiment. Nothing can demonstrate more clearly its hypocritical character in the present instance than the position of the powers that are raising it. Does it lie becomingly in the mouth of France, which owns the Italian Corsica, the German Strasburg, and the Arab Algeria? Does it come decorously from Piedmont, the mistress of Sardinia, which time out of mind has indignantly proclaimed that it is not Piedmontese, and of Savoy, which, in the late debate on Count Cavour's loan, loudly protested against being considered Italian, or being made to pay the cost of an 'Italian policy?' Such cries as 'Italy for the Italians,' 'Sardinia for the Sardes,' 'Ireland for the Irish,' generally resolve themselves either into the discontent of disappointed placehunters, or the cupidity of crowned filibusters in the neighbourhood.

It has often been the disgrace of English statesmen that they have dealt with the aspirations or the sorrows, the failure or the success, of foreign nations, merely as an element in their party strategy. They have looked into foreign politics only to see if they could extract from them a cry. This time, however, Cherbourg has startled them into earnestness. For once there is

but one opinion among all our political leaders as to the course that England should pursue. She is bound in honour strictly to observe treaties herself. She is bound in interest to enforce the observance of them on others. No vague sentiments about 'the imprescriptible claims of nationality' can be allowed to impeach the written law which is the basis of all property whether among citizens or among states. But though it is England's right to enforce the law of Europe as between contending states, she has no claim, so long as her own interests are untouched, to interfere in the national affairs of any country, whatever the extent of its misgovernment or its anarchy. She has had too varied and too bitter an experience of foreign interventions on the one hand, and dynastic friendships on the other, not to have learned the evils of a meddlesome policy. She has no mission either to enter into partnership with sovereigns, or to appear in the lists as the champion of peoples. If it pleases a sovereign to massacre his people, or if it pleases a people to behead their sovereign, it is no concern of ours. They must settle their little differences in their own peculiar fashion. If we interfere, we do but waste our scanty armies and our hard-won wealth, in order to earn the ingratitude of both sides. And yet the policy of our Governments has often been such as to make it difficult for us to decline interference without dishonour. We see a nation oppressed and trodden down, our feelings are aroused by tales of lawless severity, and we take some strong diplomatic step to express our indignation against the oppressor. When the insurrection comes the insurgents naturally enough profess to have been encouraged by our declarations, and claim our aid. If we give it, we are involved in a profitless and burdensome war; if we refuse it, we live in the memory of the deserted and crushed insurgents as the braggart friends of liberty whose deeds were as craven as their words were brave.

But this is not the only snare. There is an opposite error, perhaps even more pernicious to our good name, which we have been pursuing of late years. The accidents of diplomacy have drifted us into the alliance of a despotic ruler, against whose domestic policy the whole tone of our thought and the whole spirit of our institutions is an energetic protest: and we have chosen to interpret an alliance as if it meant the personal intimacy of ministers and courts. The result is, that we are loaded with a complicity in all the infamy of its morals and all the odium of its tyranny. Our Government must treat with respect whatever man or body of men the French nation choose to put at the head of their affairs. The exigencies of our

foreign policy may even require a close alliance; but between alliance and personal friendship there is a very long step. Alliance is a union of forces for a given end: friendship implies admiration of character and sympathy of disposition; and we can hardly wish that those who represent the English people should have sympathy with the revels at Compiègne, or admire the character which set on foot the deportations of last spring. But whatever the character of the sovereign concerned, this system of making official friendships a substitute for diplomacy is equally objectionable. If the friendship is hypocritical, it is dishonouring: if it is real, there is danger that the friends may forget, in the warmth of their friendship, those whose interests they are deputed to represent. There is no possible advantage to be derived from it. If the Emperor thinks it worth while to attack England, he will not be restrained from it by the recollection that he and Lord Malmesbury had drunk punch and smoked together in bygone years. We do not flatter ourselves that all the jokes Lord Palmerston joked, and all the small-talk Lord Clarendon elaborated at Compiègne, will have the slightest influence on the question of peace or war. If we are to pursue this policy of employing agents who shall settle great controversies through the medium of an engaging simper and a friendly chat, let us carry it out. Let us, as in former days, take 'influential ladies' into our pay, and give a handsome annuity to Madame Walewski. For, except in this fashion, the English are the last nation in the world to make much of personal influences. We had much better confine ourselves to business-like relations. The London and North-Western do not elect a chairman because he is a bosom friend of Mr. Beckett Denison. On the contrary, any very close intimacy with that irascible potentate would rather stand in a candidate's way. The London and Westminster do not select their manager on account of his having previously sown his wild oats in company with the manager of the London Joint Stock. Why should the bagmen of the firm of Victoria and Co. make a point of being seen at the Casino with the principal partners of the firm of Napoleon and Co., simply because the latter are in the act of perpetrating a gigantic fraud?

The only safe and dignified foreign policy for England, is to watch carefully over her own interests, to make treaties to forward them, to complain when they are wronged, to fight if that complaint is disregarded, and to concern herself with nothing else. Of course, it may be requisite for her safety in future years to maintain the balance of power, and to uphold the treaties which secure it. Questions of this nature are already

darkening the horizon in more than one quarter. Cuba and Nicaragua, as well as the valley of the Po and the valley of the Danube, may, any one of them, be the scene of conflicts that will force England into war. It is of course impossible to pronounce beforehand whether any particular act of aggression by which treaties are broken and the equilibrium is disturbed, is one whose danger outweighs the bloodshed and the cost of war. Such questions form the most delicate test of a statesman's sagacity; and the decision of them will be the most fearful responsibility he can incur. On it will hang the happiness of millions, and perhaps the future of civilisation itself. We wish rather than hope that when the storm breaks, as it shortly may, the politician at the helm may be one who shall avoid the alternative of feebleness or insincerity, which at present almost exhausts the list of our leading statesmen.

But the great domestic controversy of the year will bring out still more forcibly the lack of a leading statesman in whom the people trust. In dealing with a question such as that of Reform, which places all classes in an attitude of mutual hostility, the first necessity is a leading mind, which shall be capable of shaping into a consistent plan the chaos of jarring interests and views. We are, or we seem to be, on the eve of a total reconstruction of the Constitution. During the last few months a formidable change has crept over the features of this question. It used to form part of the regular stock of parliamentary annuals, ministering for a night to the glorification of Mr. Locke King, or Mr. H. Berkeley, or Sir Joshua Walmsley, and then negatived or smothered as might suit the convenience of the minister of the day. Such questions as the Ten-pound Suffrage, the Ballot, or an occasional onslaught on some of the corrupter boroughs, were looked on with but little of apprehension on one side or enthusiasm on the other; for their triumph was known to be hopeless, and few of their advocates were believed to be sincere. They had their uses. They gave notoriety to men whose powers were too slender to open to them any higher category of fame. There was always the case of Mr. Villiers, who had climbed up to office on the shoulders of Free-trade, to show that a little man on the top of a big question may look as tall as anybody else. And there is no doubt that Mr. Locke King, by continually harping upon the questions most disagreeable to the country gentlemen, has acquired in their eyes the same sort of consideration that an agriculturist bestows upon a slug. His voice was rarely heard amid the storm of conversation to which his appearance regularly gave rise: his platitudes were not likely to impose even on a metropolitan elector; but yet the

squires had a vague feeling that that drowned voice and those despised platitudes might be the ruin of them all. To frighten squires is perhaps a low ambition; but it is the only path to eminence open to the brilliant geniuses selected by the urban constituencies (who are undoubtedly the best judges) as the truest representatives of their own taste and intellect. To ambitious men noise is proverbially the only available substitute for sense; and it is curious to observe how exactly in the House of Commons the ratio is maintained between the loudness of the one and the deficiency of the other. Precisely in inverse proportion to the parliamentary esteem which an orator enjoys is the momentous nature of the question to whose tail he tags himself on the race to fame. Mr. Berkeley, who is seldom silly and often amusing, confines his efforts to the Ballot; Sir Joshua Walmsley, who was simply inane, is known as the champion of some vast extension of the suffrage. On a lower level still comes Mr. Hadfield, pleading with breathless, or at least inaspirated energy, for the destruction of the 'Hestablished Church;' and lower yet that type of incarnate vestrydom, Mr. Cox, asking us by triennial parliaments to destroy legislative independence altogether. And if there could have been found in the House of Commons any more pronounced specimen of that peculiar hue of intellect and refinement which Finsbury delights to honour, no doubt he would have proposed the abolition of the Monarchy and the House of Lords.

Such, up to last year, was the position of the question of Reform. Its details furnished a ladder to Radical notabilities, and an innocent opportunity of disposing of hustings pledges to more prudent politicians; while general promises of Reform were a graceful tribute punctiliously paid by every Liberal leader to the prejudices of his Democratic allies. 'Reformer' was as much part of the style and title of a Whig statesman as 'Defender of the Faith' is part of the style and title of our sovereigns, and conveyed nearly the same amount of meaning. Meanwhile the general public looked on with languid amusement at these political manœuvres, promising itself, perhaps, a removal of the absurdities which everybody could see on the surface of the Reform Act, but never dreaming that any question of revolution or of deep organic disturbance was at stake. Mr. Bright's winter performance in the provinces has entirely changed the aspect of affairs. He has at least done some service in frightening into sincerity many a man whose Democratic theories were merely Bunkum, and in forcing many an indolent brain to clear its thoughts. Under his reckless and passionate manipulation the question has ceased to be a controversy of details. He

has boldly disclosed that the ultimate aim of the section which he leads is to dethrone one class and instal another. He agitates for no mere extension of principles already admitted, no simple removal of anomalies; what he seeks is to invert the present distribution of power, and to shift the basis on which the Constitution rests. His own chief personal object appears to be to exalt the factory and to depress the land: but he is willing to buy the assistance of the mob towards the attainment of this triumph by concessions which will swamp the influence of factory and land alike. We confess that we cannot take a very lively interest in the discussion so far as it is limited to the rivalry between landlords and cotton-lords. Both have defects which it is easy to signalise: the one as a class are hostile to reforms, the other as a class are pitiless to the poor. Both have a claim, in common with all other property and all other interests in the country, to a due weight in the representation. If, on the one hand, it is true that the territorial interest is unfairly treated in the present composition of the House of Commons, and still more unfairly in the Bradford scheme, it is no less true that it has almost a monopoly in the House of Lords. Mr. Bright's mode of remedying the anomaly in the House of Lords by increasing the anomaly in the House of Commons is ingeniously clumsy. The power of the House of Lords is so much limited by law, and in practice is so feeble, and the representation which any interest can be said to enjoy in it is so indirect, that preponderance in the one House cannot with any fairness be treated as an indemnification for inferiority in the other. A much juster and more obvious remedy for the inequality of which Mr. Bright complains is to introduce a batch of merchants and manufacturers into the House of Lords—a process by which that venerable assembly would gain in power and not lose in wisdom. Anyhow, this part of Mr. Bright's scheme will assuredly defeat itself by its own temerity. The landed interest is amply powerful enough to take care of itself, and we feel no anxiety as to the result.

There is much more reason to fear that in the fight between county and town, the real peril of Mr. Bright's plan will be forgotten. If we are to be ruled by a mob at all, it is a matter of very minor moment whether we are ruled by the mob of the hamlet or the mob of the town. If by the flagrant fallacies of which he has been guilty while applying a population test to the reconstruction of the constituencies, he lures his adversaries into assuming a population test at all, he will have gained an enormous victory. We hardly care to inquire whether his calculations are right or wrong. It does not matter two straws whether the multiplication-table will give the preponderance

to Lancashire or to Essex: we object to being governed by the multiplication-table at all. Not the number of noses, but the magnitude of interests, should furnish the elements by which the proportions of representation should be computed. Suppose one district to contain twenty struggling green-grocers and tallow-chandlers, and another to contain a dozen of those colossal capitalists whose word is law to the bourses of Europe, and whose purses are the banking reserve of monarchies. Is it not ridiculous that the two sets of men should vote, man for man, alike, and that, supposing the two to differ on any great question of peace or war, of taxation or of expenditure, the green-grocers should be listened to, and the capitalists overborne? And though this is an extreme case of absurdity, which, on account of the mixture of various classes of the population in the same district can never practically occur in this naked form, yet it expresses the injustice to which a mere equalisation of the constituencies, without some modifying counterpoise, must inevitably tend.

It is not sufficiently remembered, in discussions on this subject, that the main business of Parliament is to decide what taxes shall be levied, who are to pay them, and how they shall be spent. Even matters which at first sight seem to be of a very different character, resolve themselves into this prosaic question at last. The principal terror of war to the mass of Englishmen, who know nothing of conscription, and to whom invasion is an old wife's tale, consists in the bill they will have to pay for it. Even the *odium theologicum* of the House, inflammable as it is, scarcely ever fairly blazes up, unless a rate or a grant is in question. Now on the levy and application of taxes, it is clear that the owners of property, who pay most taxes, have most right to be represented. Indeed, if the owners of property are not adequately represented in the governing body, their property is scarcely safe. As the representation stands at present, there are safeguards enough for property. The misfortune is, that they are indirect and circuitous, and shock the increasing straightforwardness and honesty of the age. Constituencies that can be bought, and constituencies that can be frightened, are an effective, but not a very dignified mode of securing their due influence to the educated classes. But before we sweep them away we are bound to see that their place in the Constitution is filled up. If the employment of bribery and intimidation, as constitutional guarantees, seems to us immoral—if the existence of a large unenfranchised class is inconsistent with the self-respect which the citizens of a free state should feel—at all events we must provide new guarantees

less objectionable, but as efficacious as the old. The classes that represent civilisation, the holders of accumulated capital and accumulated thought, have a right to require securities to protect them from being overwhelmed by hordes who have neither knowledge to guide them nor stake in the Commonwealth to control them. Mr. Bright stigmatises any demand for such securities as 'an intolerable and irreparable insult to the people of this country.' We ask for legal provisions to prevent men from doing wrong: is that an irreparable insult? If so, we fear that the metropolitan police is a very insulting institution. Of course it is very offensive to persons so sensitive as Mr. Bright, but still it has always been the habit of governments and legislatures to assume that their subjects may do wrong, and to act accordingly. Indeed, but for this insulting hypothesis, it is difficult to see why governments and legislatures should exist at all. They are nothing but machines for preventing the impeccable people from doing wrong. Constitutional guarantees are not a bit more insulting to electors than railway tickets are insulting to passengers. Mr. Bright should begin his crusade against this species of insult by knocking down every guard who asks him for a ticket. Banks mean no disrespect when they bar their windows. A cook may have the most profound esteem for her tabby cat, but still she locks the cream up. *Pace* Mr. Bright, we must continue to honour this tradition of domestic wisdom, and to try in our politics to keep the cat a little further from the cream.

If you give to the poor the power of taxing the rich at will, the rich will soon find the whole expenditure of the country saddled upon them. Mr. Bright's newspapers are already talking of a graduated income tax as one of the first results of the new Reform Bill; and a graduated income tax is simply confiscation. The views entertained by different classes with respect to the fair apportionment of taxation, are so conflicting, that to give them all that share of power that shall prevent any one from tyrannizing over the rest, is the only chance of an approach to justice. If you were to probe the inner soul of a duke, you would probably find it to be his mature opinion that realized property, and especially land, was very much overtaxed, and that the operations of trade had been always considered, and, indeed, were pointed out by nature as the fittest objects of taxation. The merchant would cry for direct taxation, and would ask how the country could be expected to thrive if trade was strangled at the Custom-house. The opulent tradesman would be very sensitive to the iniquity of poor rates, while the well-to-do artisan would demand that

the taxes should be paid by those who sat still, and not by those who have to labour that they may live. And the vast class who occupy yet a lower level, whose sustenance from day to day is precarious, and whose condition no revolution that could happen would make very appreciably worse, they, if their voice found a political expression, would probably clamour, as their fellows have clamoured in France, for some law that should give them a share in the vast wealth that is glittering around them, and in the midst of whose softness and splendour they starve. If Mr. Bright's proposition were, that the poorer members of the community should be admitted to a share in the representation, it would be simple justice. But the share that he claims for them is the whole. The 'uncomfortable' classes are so incalculably the most numerous, that if the same voting power per head be assigned to them as to the 'comfortable' classes, the latter will be entirely blotted out of the political map. The wealth of those who have, will be at the mercy of those who have not; and the uncontrolled power of taxation will give every facility for a legal and constitutional deglutition of the prey. And the pillage which may be the result of intrusting the omnipotence of Parliament to the most ignorant and needy class in the community cannot be measured by the present limits of taxation. The well-to-do classes, swamped by the multitudes of poorer electors, will be practically no longer represented; and the mob leaders, being at liberty to shift the whole burden upon them, will not be anxious to practise any superfluous economy. When one class votes the supplies and another pays them, it requires no prophet to predict that parsimony will not be the defect of the budget. There are many national undertakings, such as the relief of the indigent, the encouragement of emigration, perhaps the succour of oppressed nationalities abroad, which would open a wide field for the liberality of members whose constituents would not be called upon to pay the bill. And there is no reason why this should be the worst. The poorer classes, invested with absolute power, might discover, or fancy they had discovered, measures on other subjects besides taxation by which their condition could be bettered. In former times, when the landowners enjoyed an unjust preponderance of power, they used it to further their own interest by limiting the wages of labour. In our own days the trades' unions have pursued the same object, only with this difference, that they have sought to arrest not the rise of wages but the fall, and that they have attempted to carry their views out by the medium of unjust force instead of unjust laws. One of their favourite methods of compulsion has been to throw sulphuric acid in the faces of

the workmen who decline to join them. When, however, they wield the authority of the Legislature, as, if Mr. Bright is successful, they unquestionably will, they will probably prefer to proceed by Act of Parliament instead of by oil of vitriol. They will doubtless also take the question of tenant-right into their earliest consideration, and sweep away what Mr. Bright once called the 'semi-feudal exaction of rent.' Of course they will not delay to adopt the suggestion originally made by Mr. Ernest Jones, and since renewed by Mr. Bright, of putting up the Scotch deer forests for a general scramble.

This may seem an exaggerated picture to those who are so accustomed to what they see around them that they have ceased to believe in the possibility of change. And yet it is difficult to see why, in times of pressure, the virtue of the poor and ignorant, clothed with uncontrolled power, should be proof against temptations before which, in many an age and clime, the rich and educated have fallen. No doubt this state of things would not continue long. No doubt the possessors of property would seek from the sword the protection refused to them by the law, and society would prefer to resign its freedom, rather than see all that it has reclaimed from barbarism swallowed up in the Maelstrom of mob-rule. And then the end of our ill-tempered zeal and over-hasty progress would be what it has been in France; and posterity might write on the tomb of English freedom the mournful Italian epitaph, which is the brief history of nearly all human failure—*Stava bene, per star' meglio, sto qui.*

It is difficult to measure the responsibility of those who, without any definite principles to guide them, have assumed to steer us through these treacherous shoals. What their measure is our readers will know by the time they see these lines. They have kept their secret well—so well, that we cannot but suspect that, till very lately, there has been none to keep. The Cabinet meetings have been frequent—no doubt they have been stormy. It is easy to combine Conservatism and Radicalism in a speech, but they are hard to weld together into a statute. Terrible must have been the effervescence which was produced by the attempt to mingle the acid of Disraeli and the earthy alkali of Hardwicke. The chemical character of the resulting salt was long undetermined. At one time the Radical element was said to have predominated, at another time the Conservative. Long the vane veered from pole to pole, as it was touched by each varying gust from newspaper or platform. It wheeled round in obedience to the hurricane speeches of Mr. Bright; it yielded to the gentle catpaws of the doubting 'Times;' and we make no question that

the trembling arrow will point at last to the quarter from which the steady breeze of parliamentary opinion has evidently set. Not that the exact character of the Government proposition is of very vital importance. It will probably only be the canvas on which other artists will lay the colours. When it comes out of committee its parents will probably not recognise their child. Whether the alterations will be made wisely or rashly, by crotchetty motions and chance majorities, or in obedience to a sound guiding principle, who can venture to predict? If we look with anything like hopefulness to the issue, it is because we have confidence that the sound sense of Englishmen will make itself felt above the trickery of leaders, and in spite of the chaos of parties. The feeling with respect to Democracy is no longer what it once was in England. It is not now the distant unknown land, teeming with all the blessings with which theorists love to people Utopia, and to which the soberest could urge no objection save the vague unreasoning dread of the untried. It is now in the position of an experiment which has failed. It has been tried in the two lands with which England has most intercourse, and in neither has it secured either liberty or order. The steady growth and the unabated horrors of slavery in the United States, the broken public credit, the servile judiciary, the utter subjection of all that is free and independent to the caprices of the mob, are warnings that we Englishmen have not listened to in vain. Still less are we blind to the galling tyranny which exists across the Channel, and which universal suffrage and vote by ballot have imposed. Englishmen are pretty well agreed that no misconstrued traditions of the past, no arithmetical statesmanship of the present, shall induce them to bow their necks either to the sham liberty of America or the undisguised slavery of France.

II.

STUDIES ON HOMER AND THE HOMERIC AGE.

Studies on Homer and the Homeric Age. By the Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone, D.C.L., M.P. for the University of Oxford. Oxford: at the University Press. 1858.

THE past career of the human race must be carefully studied by those who would attempt to solve the problem of its destiny. They must know whence it has come, in order to judge whither it is tending. History, strictly speaking, does not supply us with sufficient data for this calculation. The records of those ages which are properly called historical, exhibit, after all, but one phase in the development of humanity. Throughout the past, we see arts, letters, institutions, in a word, civilisation—not indeed such a civilisation as we now enjoy, but yet a civilisation which we cannot conceive to have existed from the beginning. The philosophic historian looks beyond the limits of the period represented by contemporary annals, and interrogates the relics of the primitive world. The phenomena which are presented to his view, and from which he has to draw his inferences, are sufficiently varied and heterogeneous, but are susceptible of classification.

In the first place we have the most ancient Scriptures of the Old Testament, with their mysterious picture of the primal condition of man, of the loss of original innocence, and of the Divine judgments upon human wickedness. Gradually emerging from the obscurity of the antediluvian world, we find finished sketches of the domestic life of the patriarchs, ultimately passing into the history of the Hebrew nation.

The second source of knowledge, from which we may draw inferences as to the fortunes of the human race, finds itself in the early traditions of heathen nations. These traditions are in almost every case composed of various elements, historical, ethical, and even physical, and are ordinarily embodied in the poetry and religion of their several countries. The line between history and tradition is one which it is by no means easy to draw. While historical facts are in many instances either mixed up with what is purely mythical, or presented in a mythical form, mythology, on the other hand, is often found to cast its shadow upon history, and to influence the thoughts even of contemporary narrators.

Lastly, we have the unconscious and therefore unbiassed testimony of material antiquities and of language. The flint-headed arrows and shapeless canoes of our earliest predecessors in these islands furnish us with evidence upon which we may safely rely, although it needs a careful interpreter. Sphinxes and winged bulls record the youth of art and civilisation. Language is not only the surest test of national affinities, but is found in numerous instances to stereotype successive stages in the intellectual and social development of races.

We are thus presented with three main sources of primitive history—Holy Scripture, mythology, and ethnology, the last grounded upon and including archæology and comparative philology. The works of the great father of Greek literature, which have been made the subject of a diligent anatomy in the three volumes now before us, fall mainly under the second head. In a certain sense, and to a certain degree, they belong to the province of actual history, as would be admitted even by the most sceptical historian. With regard, however, to the exact sense and the precise degree in which this admission may fairly be made, Mr. Gladstone would probably be at issue with most modern scholars. All would allow, in general terms at least, that the Homeric poems constitute the first chapter in the history of Greece. But when we come to interpret this apparently unanimous assertion, we shall find such a divergence as amounts to absolute contradiction.

The leading idea of Mr. Gladstone's book is the strictly historical character of the Homeric poems. Of course he must be understood to speak in general terms. We do not suppose that he commits himself to the single combats of the *Iliad*, as he confessedly does not commit himself to the marvellous adventures of the *Odyssey*. The divine interpositions in either poem he must of course be supposed to look upon in the light of so much theatrical machinery. But he treats the war of Troy as an historical fact, and the combined chieftains on either side as historical personages: he speaks as confidently of the successive dynasties in the pre-Homeric Peloponnese, as we might of the Flavian family or of the house of Hapsburg; and has no more hesitation about the pedigree of Priam, than can be reasonably entertained as to the lineal descent of her Majesty from the Conqueror.

'No discussion,' says Mr. Gladstone, 'upon the general as well as poetical elevation of Homer, can be complete or satisfactory without a more definite consideration of the question, What is the historical value of his testimony? This is not settled by our showing either his existence or

his excellence in his art. No man doubts Ariosto's, or Boiardo's, or Virgil's personality, or their high rank as poets; but neither would any man quote them as authorities on a point of history.'

The obvious conclusion, at least to the untutored mind of an ordinary inquirer, is, that no man should quote Homer as an historical authority, whatever his poetical merits may be, unless it can be shown that his case differs from that of the epic writers of ancient or mediæval Italy in such a manner, and to such an extent, as to make it evident or probable that he was, in fact, a metrical historian. And this is what Mr. Gladstone does not scruple to assert.

'He alone of all the now famous epic writers, moves (in the "Iliad," especially,) subject to the stricter laws of time and place; he alone, while producing an unsurpassed work of the imagination, is also the greatest chronicler that ever lived, and presents to us, from his own single hand, a representation of life, manners, history—of morals, theology, and politics—so vivid and comprehensive, that it may be hard to say whether any of the more refined ages of Greece and Rome, with their clouds of authors, and their multiplied forms of historical record, are either more faithfully or more completely conveyed to us. He alone presents to us a mind and an organization working with such precision, that, setting aside for the moment any question as to the genuineness of his text, we may reason in general from his minutest indications with the confidence that they belong to some consistent and intelligible whole.'

This is an eloquent passage; and, like many other eloquent passages in the work from which it is taken, carries us away with it before we have time to inquire into its precise scope and signification. What does it mean? Does it mean that Homer is a credible witness to facts and events, or merely that he gives us a true, though possibly a highly-coloured picture of life and manners? Taken alone, the words do not necessarily carry more than the latter assertion. But it is evident that Mr. Gladstone, in speaking throughout the whole work of the historical character of the Homeric poems, and even of the historic aim of Homer himself, means a great deal more than this. If this is all that he means, three bulky volumes are not needed to prove and develop what everybody will admit. Unless, therefore, Homer is strictly and literally 'the greatest chronicler that ever lived,' the whole is worthless. But this is the view which Mr. Gladstone evidently takes. At the same time, by what has very much the appearance of an *arrière pensée*, he has prepared a refuge for his theory, in case it should be driven back from his exterior defences. As the round assertion that Homer was the greatest chronicler that ever lived (as interpreted by the general tenor of Mr. Gladstone's book) dwindles into a very small compass when examined by the light of the

very next sentence, which describes him as a chronicler, of 'life and manners,' so Mr. Gladstone makes an admission elsewhere which virtually neutralizes his claim for Homer to the character of a historian, and practically cuts away the ground from beneath his own feet.

'Indeed, while I contend keenly for the historic aim and character of Homer, I understand the terms in a sense much higher than that of mere precision in the leading narration. We may, as I am disposed to think, even if we should disbelieve the existence of Helen, of Agamemnon, or of Troy, yet hold, in all that is most essential, by the historical character of Homer. For myself, I ask to be permitted to believe in these, and in much besides these; yet I also plead that the main question is, not whether he has correctly recorded a certain series of transactions, but whether he has truly and faithfully represented manners and characters, feelings and tastes, races and countries, principles and institutions. Here lies the pith of history: these it has for its soul, and fact for its body. It does not appear to me reasonable to presume that Homer idealized his narrative with anything like the license which was permitted to the Carolingian romance; yet even that romance did not fail to retain, in many of the most essential particulars, a true historic character; and it conveys to us, partly by fact, and partly through a vast parable, the inward life of a period pregnant with forces that were to operate powerfully upon our own characters and conditions. Even those who would regard the cases as parallel, should, therefore, remember that they, too, must read Homer otherwise than as a poet in the vulgar and more prevailing sense, which divests poetry of its relation to reality. The more they read him in that spirit, the higher, I believe, they will raise their estimate of his still unknown and unappreciated treasures.'

This, again, is a splendid piece of declamation; but it is by no means clear from it how much Mr. Gladstone expects his readers to believe, or how much he believes himself, of the historical character of Homer. In fact, he appears before us, in this and other places, rather in the character of a writer who has sat down to his desk without having made up his mind on the main problems of his undertaking, and who thinks out his conclusions while he is correcting the proof-sheets. Observe the fallacy at the very outset. 'While I contend keenly for the historic aim and character of Homer, I understand the terms in a sense *much higher* than that of mere precision in the leading narration.' It is a trite observation, that the reader of history would willingly exchange much of the details of battles and sieges, or even the narration of successions and alliances, with which history is at present crowded, for more minute and trustworthy information as to the life and manners of our forefathers. It is quite true, in this sense, that such an accuracy as Mr. Gladstone here claims for his author—and such as, with certain deductions, may fairly be accorded to him—is 'much higher' than credibility in mere matters of fact. But this is only true

in the abstract. What is higher and lower, better and worse, must after all be estimated in relation to the purpose to which it is to be applied. For Mr. Gladstone's purpose, the ideal truth which we willingly concede to the Homeric representations is by no means sufficient. His superstructure is entirely erected on the basis of the actual truth of the Homeric history, at least in its main outline. Mr. Gladstone, indeed, claims for himself 'to be permitted to believe in' Troy, Helen, Agamemnon, and much besides; but he treats the belief in the passage we have just quoted as an open question after all, as a pious opinion rather than as a catholic dogma. But when we come to examine his speculations in detail, we find that he treats this subordinate matter, which belongs to the 'body' and not to the 'soul' of history, as something very nearly approaching to an axiomatic truth. The existence of Helen, of Agamemnon, and of Troy, is presumed throughout. Deny this, and the greater part of Mr. Gladstone's theories instantly vanish. Neither does it appear to us that our author is altogether consistent with himself in the relation which he endeavours to establish between the Homeric poems and those of the epic writers of the middle ages. He considers that although Homer did not indulge in the license assumed by the Carlovingian romance, 'yet even that romance did not fail to retain, in many of the most essential particulars, a true historic character.' In other words, although we are not to believe in the hippogriff, we may believe that the character of the middle ages is, as no man would venture to deny, thoroughly imprinted upon the Orlando Furioso. But if this be so, and if representations of life and character, rather than an accurate narrative of events, constitute the vital essence of history, what becomes of Mr. Gladstone's assertion, that no man would quote Ariosto or Boiardo as authorities on an historical point?

In spite, however, of Mr. Gladstone's partial disclaimer, it is evident that his idea of Homer as an historical authority extends beyond the value of his testimony to manners and institutions. In fact, the arguments upon which his critic rests the poet's claims to that character, are of a kind which, if they prove anything, which is doubtful, prove, not that Homer represented manners accurately, but that he designed and executed a truthful narrative of events. The first of these arguments is drawn from the large amount of surplusage in the poems. 'The immense mass of matter contained in the Iliad, which is beyond what the action of the poem requires, and yet is in its nature properly historical, of itself supplies the strongest proof of the historic aims of the poet.' The writer alludes in particular, to

the genealogies, to the details in the Catalogue of the Ships, and, we must suppose, to such episodes as those of Phoenix and Meleager. These facts, if they prove anything, only prove that Homer's aims were historical in what Mr. Gladstone himself would consider as a subsidiary sense. But, in fact, they do not prove so much as that. An epic writer creates and sustains interest in his characters by telling you all their antecedents. He does not, like the dramatist, confine his attention to the matter immediately necessary for the evolution of his plot. In one sense, perhaps, we might concede the claim of Homer to a 'historic aim' in these details of his works, although it is hardly that which is intended by Mr. Gladstone. We do not doubt that a large part of his materials was ready to his hand, and that it was his object to preserve such legends as he could find any reasonable pretext for interweaving with his lay. Mediæval fiction abounds in surplusage, where we cannot presume the intention of the author to have been the production of a historical narrative. One of the most remarkable instances of this, which occurs to us at present, is to be found in the extremely curious collection of Welsh romances, which has been given to the public in an English dress by the patriotic care of Lady Charlotte Guest. In the 'Mabinogi' of Kilhwch and Olwen, the main topic of which is the great boar-hunt of King Arthur and his knights, the hero, almost at the opening of the tale, enters the hall of the royal palace at dinner-time, and invokes the aid of Arthur and of all the knights and ladies of his court. The names cover nearly eleven pages of Lady Charlotte Guest's sumptuous volume, and form a catalogue rivalling, if not surpassing, that in the second book of the 'Iliad.' But the catalogue does not consist of mere names. It is adorned with parenthetic histories of the worthies who bear those names, which are for the most part utterly irrelevant to the story. This tale, which on other accounts deserves attentive examination, as being, although in prose, perhaps the most ancient genuine specimen of a Celtic epic, is remarkable as containing an enormous amount of superfluous matter, both in this catalogue and elsewhere, while it would be obviously absurd to ascribe a 'historic aim' to the writer.

Herodotus, moreover, is frequently spoken of as partaking of the characteristics of epic writers. Perhaps there is no place in which he is more thoroughly epic, and more unlike a chronicler, than in the serio-comic story of the Marriage of Megacles and Agariste. Who has not laughed over the *nonchalance* of the disappointed Hippoclides? Turn now to the Catalogue of the Suitors, in which it is impossible not to hear an echo of the

second book of the 'Iliad.' The father and country of each is told, and many little circumstances, irrelevant to the main story, though characteristic of each, are added. We feel instinctively that Herodotus, father of history though he be, is playing the poet rather than the historian in the passage before us, and that the details are added far more for the sake of embellishment than for that of recording facts neither connected with the matter in hand nor particularly important in themselves.

Mr. Gladstone has another argument to allege in favour of the 'historic aim' of his author. He infers it from the minute details with which the poems abound. For example, he asks—

'Why should Homer say of Clytemnestra, that till corrupted by Ægisthus she was good? Why should it be worth his while to pretend that the iron ball offered by Achilles for a prize was the one formerly pitched by Eetion? Why should he spend eight lines in describing the dry trunk round which the chariots were to drive? Why should he tell us that Tydeus was of small stature? Why does Menelaus drive a mare? Why has Penelope a sister Iphthime, "who was wedded to Eumelus," wanted for no other purpose than as a *persona* for Minerva in a dream? These questions, every one will admit, might be indefinitely multiplied.'

No doubt it would be much easier to multiply them than to answer them. But it is not difficult to see that they may be in some instances a part of the 'graceful finish,' as Mr. Gladstone expresses it, of a story, which it is not therefore necessary to suppose to be a true one, and partly because the poet found traditional materials ready to his hand. We must therefore, in answer to the author's string of interrogatories, take refuge in the *Pourquoi non?* of Fontenelle.

Not content with positive arguments, the author, by an ingenious dialectical stratagem, which we shall again have occasion to notice, endeavours to shift the *onus probandi* upon objectors. He says—

'But first of all, may we not ask, from whence comes the presumption against Homer as an historical authority? Not from the fact that he mixes marvels with common events; for this, to quote no other instance, would destroy along with him Herodotus. Does it not arise from this,—that his compositions are poetical; that history has long ceased to adopt the poetical form; that an old association has thus been dissolved; that a new and adverse association has taken its place, which connects poetry with fiction; and that we illogically reflect this modern association upon early times, to which it is utterly inapplicable?

'If so, there is no burden of proof incumbent upon those who regard Homer as an historical authority. The presumptions are all in favour of their so regarding him. The question will, of course, remain—In what proportions has he mixed history with imaginative embellishment?'

We fail to see the parallel between the marvels of Homer

and those of Herodotus. No doubt Herodotus has 'mixed history with imaginative embellishment;' so has Thucydides; so have all historians, ancient and modern. The impossible debate on the future constitution of Persia, which Herodotus puts into the mouths of the conspirators, seems to be a mere reflection of the historian's mind. Neither does any one suppose that the funeral oration of Pericles was delivered in the words which have come down to us. But the marvels recorded by Herodotus are not part of his imaginative embellishment, as Mr. Gladstone would allow that those of Homer are. We have no reason to believe that he invented any of his prodigies. Contrast him for a moment with his mediæval antitype, Sir John Maundeville. Herodotus informs us of the existence of all manner of monstrous and inconceivable animals, which he reports on hearsay, and which the progress of modern science alone has proved not to exist. Sir John Maundeville describes the very same creatures, but he invariably tells us that he saw them himself. The consequence is that we credit Herodotus, where he speaks on his own authority, while we call Sir John Maundeville an 'undaunted liar.' The sole exception, in the case of the former, strengthens our case. The 'ants as big as foxes,' mentioned by both the ancient and the mediæval traveller, were actually seen by the former in the Royal Zoological Garden at Babylon. *What* Herodotus saw, may be a matter of doubt; but that he saw something, no reasonable person can entertain any doubt whatever. The accessory details, the ant-hills, the camels, and the gold-dust, were probably derived from a Babylonian *cicerone*, who need not be supposed to have been more veracious or better informed than the gentlemen who undertake for a few *lire* to conduct the modern traveller over all that is worth seeing in an Italian city, in the shortest possible space of time. The case of Homer is obviously different. His miracles are part of the texture of his work. What right have we to tear them out, and to say that the residuum is historical truth? The man who could invent prodigies, could also invent verisimilitudes, and it is impossible to say how much or how little he may have invented.

But Mr. Gladstone tells us that 'the presumption against Homer as an historical authority' arises from the fact that 'his compositions are poetical,' and that 'history has long since ceased to adopt the poetical form.' From this it is argued that 'there is no burden of proof incumbent upon those who regard Homer as an historical authority. The presumptions are all in favour of their so regarding him.' Surely this piece of argumentation is wholly unworthy of its accomplished author. The

denial of the presumptions against the authority of Homer, drawn from the poetical form of his works, is very far from involving the assertion of a presumption in favour of that authority. The refutation of an argument against the veracity of the 'Iliad,' does not amount to an argument in its favour. The wanderings of Ulysses may not be the less historical because they were sung and not said, but they cannot be the more historical for that reason. In a word, the *onus probandi* remains exactly where it did, namely, with those who assert, and not with those who deny, the authenticity of these great works.

We are anxious, however, not to be misunderstood. We do not desire to detract from the historical importance of these wonderful remains. Our wish is to place it on its true basis. Two questions at once arise. How far, and in what sense, do we believe in the 'historic aim' of Homer? How far, and in what sense, do we admit his historical authority? The questions are distinct, and Mr. Gladstone has perhaps, to a certain extent, confounded them. A writer may have an 'historic aim,' and yet be almost valueless as an authority. A writer may be a valuable authority on an historical point, while his aim was not at all, or only indirectly, historical. As regards the alleged 'historic aim' of Homer, we are inclined to believe that he wished; among other things, to preserve legends which he found ready to his hand; but we infer from the analogy of poetry in all ages, and not in modern times alone, that the wish was subsidiary to that of producing a great and striking work. Poetry, according to Mr. Gladstone, has been divorced from history in ages later than that of Homer. It is incumbent on Mr. Gladstone to show that poetry was ever wedded to history. The main object of history is to record facts: the main object of poetry is to strike the imagination and feelings. Poetry is, in the nature of things, prior to history. The love of historical truth for its own sake is a sentiment of comparatively late growth in the human breast. It is not true to say that in early times poetry was the vehicle of historical narrative. It is much more true to say that the general intellectual condition of mankind in those ages was favourable to poetry, while, in the proper sense of the word, it did not admit of history. No doubt the materials of which the poet made use were in part historical. There can be no question, that many facts are imbedded in the mythologies of all countries. We do not believe in Mr. Grote's 'past that was never present,' without at least making very considerable deductions. But whether, or to what extent, the ore can be separated from the dross, is a further question. It

is in this sense, however, and only in this, that primitive poetry took the place of history. Not because the aim of the poet was directly historical, but because he made use of historical matter, mixed up with much that was purely imaginary, to serve his own ends.

With regard to the historical credibility, as distinguished from the historic aim, of Homer, we must carefully distinguish between the authority of the poet as a witness to facts, and his authority as a witness to manners. Mr. Gladstone, as we have already seen, has drawn the same distinction in words, while he has done a good deal, throughout his work, practically to confound the two things. The value of Homer as a witness to facts is, at the best, doubtful. Not because there is any doubt that he has recorded facts; but because it is also evident that he has recorded fictions. In the absence of external testimony, it is perhaps impossible for the most careful scrutiny to decide which are the facts and which are the fictions. We do not say, with Mr. Grote, 'the curtain is the picture.' The question is rather, as in the case of the 'Cenacolo' of Leonardo, how much of the picture is original, and how much of it has been tampered with? We should naturally be disposed to single out some of the main figures of the 'Iliad' as historical. Agamemnon and Achilles may have been as genuine realities as Godfrey and Tancred, but their existence, from lack of contemporary evidence, is no better certified than that of King Arthur and the 'bold Sir Bedivere.' The Trojan war may be as real as the first crusade, and, in general terms, we are disposed to believe in it; but we do not feel that we have any satisfactory reason to give for our belief, beyond the vague impression that it must represent something which actually occurred.

The authority of the poet as a witness to manners is admitted on all hands. And this is confessed by Mr. Gladstone himself to be a far higher and more important consideration than the value of his testimony to external events. We suppose, however, that our author does not imagine that the 'historic aim' of the poet extended to this department, or that it was his object to hand down a picture of the social and political condition of his contemporaries to their posterity. When we recollect how difficult it is for us, with the historical experience of centuries before our eyes, to conceive the outward changes in the world which must inevitably take place in the course of the next half-century, it is not easy to imagine that Homer, writing in the world's youth, had any desire to record the existing condition of things for the benefit of future generations. In fact, the value of his testimony on these points is in proportion, not to the

existence, but to the absence, of an historic aim, and of all aims whatsoever. It is because the poet works naturally and unconsciously in the element and atmosphere which surrounds him, that he is able to reproduce the state of things in which he lives and moves. Architectural antiquaries are enabled to fix the date of a mediæval building, not by its outline and general design, but by its mouldings and minuter ornaments. Why so? Because the architect varied the general plan according to his own taste or necessary circumstances, while he caught the smaller details from his fellow-craftsmen, and could not produce any work except in the architectural language of the time. We of the nineteenth century are copyists in art and literature. We endeavour consciously to reproduce the works of past ages in their minutest details. But consciousness implies falsification. Homer's pictures of life are true and genuine, precisely because he was unconscious. He represented the condition of things in which he lived, precisely because he had no conception of the existence of any other.

In the sense here acknowledged, and subject to the deductions which have been made, we fully admit the historical importance of the Homeric writings. The tenth section of Mr. Gladstone's second volume, on 'the Office of the Homeric Poems in relation to that of the early Books of Holy Scripture,' is, to our mind, the most unimpeachable, as it is the most eloquent portion of the entire work. Our readers will not be sorry to have some of the most striking passages which it contains transcribed for their benefit.

'Even if they are regarded in no other light than as literary treasures, the position, both of the oldest books among the Sacred Scriptures, and, next to them, of the Homeric poems, is so remarkable, as not only to invite, but to command the attention of every inquirer into the early condition of mankind. Each of them opens to us a scene, of which we have no other literary knowledge. Each of them is either wholly or in a great degree, isolated, and cut off from the domain of history, as it is commonly understood. Each of them was preserved with the most jealous care by the nation to which they severally belonged. By far the oldest of known compositions, and with conclusive proof upon the face of them that their respective origins were perfectly distinct and independent, they, notwithstanding, seem to be in no point contradictory, while in many they are highly confirmatory of each other's genuineness and antiquity. Still, as historical representations, and in a purely human aspect, they are greatly different. The Holy Scriptures are like a thin stream, beginning from the very fountain-head of our race, and gradually, but continuously finding their way through an extended solitude, into times otherwise known, and into the general current of the fortunes of mankind. The Homeric poems are like a broad lake outstretched in the distance, which provides us with a mirror of one particular age and people, alike full and marvellous, but

which is entirely dissociated by an interval of many generations from any other records, except such as are of the most partial and fragmentary kind. In respect of the influence which they have respectively exercised upon mankind, it might appear almost profane to compare them. In this point of view the Scriptures stand so far apart from every other production, on account of their great offices in relation to the coming of the Redeemer, and to the spiritual training of mankind, that there can be nothing either like or second to them.

‘ But undoubtedly, after however wide an interval, the Homeric poems thus far at least stand in a certain relation to the Scriptures, that no other work of man can be compared to them. Their immediate influence has been great; but that influence which they have exercised through their share in shaping the mind and nationality of Greece, and again, through Greece, upon the world, cannot readily be reduced to measure: *Les vraies origines de l'esprit humain sont là : tous les nobles de l'intelligence y retrouvent la patrie de leurs pères.* Insomuch that, passing over the vast interval between those purposes which concern salvation, and every other purpose connected with man, this remains to be admitted, that there is a relative parallelism between the oldest Holy Scriptures and the works of Homer. For each of them stands at the head of the powers to which they respectively belong; and the minor seems to present to our view, as well as the major one, the indications of a distinct providential aim that was to be attained through its means.’

Mr. Gladstone is not content to express the relation between these two primitive sources of knowledge merely in general terms. He argues, and with truth, that there is a Revelation of Providence as well as a Revelation of Grace, and as the Jewish nation was singled out to be the depository of a religion which was hereafter to be the religion of at least the civilised portion of mankind, so the Greeks and Romans were providentially chosen to prepare that civilisation in which true religion finds its full development.

‘ In the west, we must view the extraordinary developments which human nature received, both individually and in its social forms, among the Greeks and Romans, as having been intended to fulfil high providential purposes. They supplied materials for the intellectual and social portions of that European civilisation, which derives its spiritual substance from the Christian faith.’ ‘ All these varied manifestations may differ much in their character and rank, but yet, like body, soul, and spirit of a man, they are to be referred to one origin, and they are integrants to one another.’

In like manner, we are told that ‘ the early Scriptures and the Homeric poems combine to make up for us a sufficiently complete form of the primitive records of our race.’ This is perhaps saying rather too much, and too little account is taken throughout of the mythology and earliest records of other countries, of India and Persia, of Assyria and Egypt, and of the traditions of our Teutonic forefathers. Still the writings of Homer stand out so vividly amidst the mass of primitive my-

thology and poetry, and are, as it were, the fountain-head of a civilisation so unparalleled, that we may be content to treat them as, in a certain sense, the complements of the most ancient books of the Old Testament. The Old Testament, as Mr. Gladstone says very truly, is to be estimated with reference to its aim and purpose.

‘Each has its own function to perform, so that there is no room for competition between them, and it is better to avoid comparison altogether, and to decline to consider the legislation of Moses as a work to be compared either with the heroic institutions, or with systems like those of Lycurgus or of Solon. We then obtain a clear view of it as a scheme evidently constructed not alone with human but with superhuman wisdom, if only we measure it with reference to its very peculiar end.’

In like manner, Mr. Gladstone refuses to try the Law, the Psalms, or the Prophets ‘before the tribunal of the mere literary critic.’ They are each and all *sui generis*, and stand apart from all purely human compositions.

‘Most of all does the Book of Psalms refuse the challenge of philosophical or poetical competition. In that book, for well nigh three thousand years, the piety of saints has found its most refined and choicest food; to such a degree, indeed, that the rank and quality of the religious frame may in general be tested, at least negatively, by the height of its relish for them. There is the whole music of the human heart, when touched by the hand of the Maker, in all its tones that whisper or that swell, for every hope or fear, for every joy and pang, for every form of strength or languor, of disquietude and rest. There are developed all the innermost relations of the human soul to God, built upon the platform of a covenant of love and sonship that had its foundations in the Messiah, while in this particular and privileged book it was permitted to anticipate His coming.

‘We can no more, then, compare Isaiah and the Psalms with Homer, than we can compare David’s heroism with Diomed’s, or the prowess of the Israelites when they drove Philistia before them, with the valour of the Greeks at Marathon or Plataea, at Issus or Arbela. We shall most nearly do justice to each by observing carefully the boundary lines of their respective provinces.’

Before our Lord came, individual and social greatness, as exemplified in the most famous nations among the Gentiles, were divorced from the sentiment of personal and filial dependence upon the Most High, which was reserved as the exclusive privilege of the Hebrew nation. ‘The treasure of divine revelation was hidden in a napkin: it was given to a people who were almost forbidden to impart it: at least of whom it was simply required, that they should preserve it without variation.’ It was committed to the custody of an obscure and despised race, from whom, in regard to the excellences of this life, whether private or political, modern nations have learned little or nothing. In this respect, Gentiles and not Jews have been our

schoolmasters. The two lines of divine teaching, originally distinct, converge in Christianity. The Christian nations of modern Europe are the heirs of all the ages.

‘It seems impossible not to be struck, at this point, with the contrast between the times preceding the Advent, and those which have followed it. Since the Advent, Christianity has marched for fifteen hundred years at the head of human civilisation; and has driven, harnessed to its chariot as the horses of a triumphal car, the chief intellectual and material forces of the world. Its learning has been the learning of the world, its art the art of the world, its genius the genius of the world; its greatness, glory, grandeur, and majesty have been almost, though not absolutely, all that in these respects the world has to boast of. That which is to come, I do not presume to portend; but of the past we may speak with confidence. He who hereafter, in even the remotest age, with the colourless impartiality of mere intelligence, may seek to know what durable results mankind has for the last fifteen hundred years achieved, what capital of the mind it has accumulated and transmitted, will find his investigations perforce concentrated upon, and almost confined to that part, that minor part, of mankind which has been Christian.’

Our readers must bear with us if we give them one more long extract—

‘The picture thus offered to our view is a very remarkable one. We see the glories of the world, and that greatest marvel of God’s earthly creation, the mind of man, become like little children, and yield themselves to be led by the hand of the Good Shepherd. But it seems as though the ancient promise of His coming, while just strong enough to live in this wayward sphere, was not strong enough to make the conquest of it; as if nothing but His own actual manifestation in the strength of lowliness and of sorrow, and crowned by the extremity of contempt and shame, was sufficient to restore for the world at large that symbol of the universal duty of individual obedience and conformity, which is afforded by the establishment of the authority of the spiritual King over all the functions of our nature, and all the spheres, however manifold and remote they may seem to be, in which they find their exercise. Nor is this lesson the less striking because this, like other parts of the divine dispensations, has been marred by the perversity of man, ever striving to escape from that inward control wherein lies the true hope and safety of his race.

‘But, even after the Advent, it was not at once that the Sovereign of the new kingdom put in His claim for all the wealth that it contained. As in the day of His humiliation, He rode into Jerusalem, foreshadowing His royal dominion to come, so St. Paul was forthwith consecrated to God as a kind of first-fruits of the learning and intellect of man. Yet for many generations after Christ, it was still the Supreme will to lay in human weakness the foundations of divine strength. Not the apostles only, but the martyrs, and not the martyrs only, but the first fathers and doctors of the church, were men of whom none could suspect that they drew the weapons of their warfare from the armouries of human cultivation: nor of them could it be said, that by virtue of their human endowments they had achieved the triumphs of the cross; as it might perhaps have been said, had they brought to their work the immense popular powers of St. Chrysostom, or the masculine energy of St. Athanasius, or the varied and comprehensive genius of St. Augustine.

‘ Nor again, if we are right in the belief that we are not to look for the early development of humanity in the pages of Jewish and patriarchal history, but rather to believe that it was given to another people, and the office of recording it to the father, not only of poetry, but of letters, does it seem difficult to read in this arrangement the purpose of the Most High, and herewith the wisdom of that purpose. Had the Scriptures been preserved, had the Messiah been incarnate, among a people who were in political sagacity, in martial energy, in soaring and diving intellect, in vivid imagination, in the graces of art and civilised life, the flower of their time, then the divine origin of Christianity would have stood far less clear and disembarrassed than it now does. The eagle that mounted upon high, bearing on his wings the Everlasting Gospel, would have made his first spring from a great eminence, erected by the wit and skill of man; and the elevation of that eminence, measured upward from the plain of common humanity, would have been so much to be deducted from the triumph of the Redeemer.

‘ Thus the destructive theories of those, who teach us to regard Christianity as no more than a new stage, added to stages that had been previously achieved in the march of human advancement, would have been clothed in a plausibility which they must now for ever want. “God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things that are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are.” An unhonoured, undistinguished race, simply elected to be the receivers of the Divine Word, and having remained its stiff-necked and almost reluctant guardians, may have best suited the aim of Almighty wisdom; because the medium, through which the most precious gifts were conveyed, was pale and colourless, instead of being one flushed with the splendours of Empire, Intellect, and Fame.’

We have extracted, almost at length, this string of brilliant passages, not more on account of their surpassing eloquence, than because we regard them in the light of a valuable protest against the miserable narrow-mindedness which can draw no lessons of wisdom, or which, never having made the experiment for itself, believes that no lessons of wisdom can be drawn, capable of influencing the mind of the nineteenth century, from the history, philosophy, and literature of the ancient world. This narrow-mindedness is of two sorts, religious and secular, and Mr. Gladstone fairly confronts them both. According to one, all that need be known of man, his nature, his history, and his destiny, is not merely involved, but expressly taught in Holy Scripture. According to the other, we gain nothing from any instructor other than the experience of our own times. The former is the characteristic of the Ultramontane party in France, who forbid or discourage the use of the classics in education, or of the Puritans of England, who sought for political precedents in the conduct of Joshua or David: the latter is the spirit of the Prussian monarch, who horsewhipped his son’s tutor for teaching the prince a few words of Latin, and of

the modern statesman who believes that there is more political wisdom to be gathered from a single copy of the 'Times' than from 'all the works' of Thucydides. The former class would reduce us to the dilemma of the Caliph Omar; the latter would make even shorter work, and abolish every memorial of the past. In contradiction to both of these views, but more particularly to the former, the providential purpose of Gentile civilisation has been prominently brought forward by Mr. Gladstone. There is far too great a disposition, especially among religious people, to regard all beyond the pale of Judaism and Christianity, as having, so to speak, no relation to the divine purposes. We are apt to forget, in connection with the Gentile world, that God is indeed both 'Maker of all things,' and 'Judge of all men.' We look upon the heathen as if they were not only 'aliens from the commonwealth of Israel,' but 'exiled from the eternal providence.' The divine wisdom as manifested in the movements and fortunes of nations, the feeling after God and His everlasting truth in the poets and philosophers of heathendom, have no place in the religious schemes of too many among us.

Although the main object of Mr. Gladstone, in the section from which we have made such copious extracts, is to recommend the especial claims of his author, the force of his arguments is by no means confined, and there is no reason to suppose that he would wish to confine it, to the Homeric poems. He would doubtless agree with us in extending it, in their several degrees, to the long list of illustrious writers in every branch of Greek and Roman literature, especially the former. He has singled out Homer from among the rest, for more reasons than one, but mainly for these two. First, because he gives us the earliest picture of the Gentile world, and the one, according to Mr. Gladstone's view, most nearly approaching to the main features of the patriarchal system. Secondly, because of the influence exercised by Homer upon the mind of Greece, resembling, although not equalling, the influence of Holy Scripture upon the modern nations of Christendom. Regarding the matter in these two points of view, we can quite go along with Mr. Gladstone in claiming a high place for the study of the Homeric poems.

We are, however, disposed to think, that Mr. Gladstone's enthusiasm for his author has in this and in other matters rather run away with him. It is not enough, in his opinion, to call the attention of mature scholars to the importance of this study; he wishes us to regard Homer as of paramount importance in a classical education. He contends that 'the study of Homer in

our universities is as yet below the point to which it is desirable that it should be carried.' Whether that is the case or not, it is quite true that, although in Oxford at least it has been much extended of late years, it is far more limited than, when it is looked at from Mr. Gladstone's point of view, would seem desirable. At the public schools, indeed, it has always formed an important element in the ordinary routine of education. The graphic descriptions, the vivid colouring, the life and motion of the whole, fascinate and arrest the attention of boys, and at the same time stimulate and refine their imaginations. Add to which, that the language of Homer, treated as it would be treated in the fourth and fifth forms of a public school, is sufficiently simple to supply them with an easy textbook of Greek. It requires great grasp and concentration of mind to deal with the complex and idiomatic sentences of Sophocles or Thucydides. Homer sings as simply as a child, and, the vocabulary once mastered, can be understood by children. But to the more advanced scholar it is the vocabulary of Homer that constitutes the difficulty. In the education of the upper boys at school, or in that of students at the universities, this becomes the main point of interest. It is here that the study of the Greek language comes into contact with the higher and more comprehensive study of comparative philology.

The University of Oxford, in its Examination Statute of 1850, made especial provision for the study of Homer. The intermediate examination, or 'Moderations,' as it is generally called to avoid an inconvenient official circumlocution, is mainly devoted to the Greek and Latin Poets and Orators, among the former of whom the study of '*Homerus ille*' is especially prescribed to candidates for honours. The examination in these books is confined to their text and language, except in the way of illustration. The historians and philosophers, whose works are reserved for the final examination, are alone taken up for the matter which they contain. Mr. Gladstone hails this measure both as an improvement in itself and as a possible earnest of further improvements in future; but it does not by any means satisfy his idea of the position due to the study of Homer.

'It is clear that the study of this great master should not be confined to preparation for examinations which deal principally with language, or which cannot enter upon either primitive history, or philosophy, or policy, or religion, except by way of secondary illustration. Better far that he should be studied simply among the poets, than that he should not be studied at all. But as long as he is read only among the poets, he cannot, I believe, be read effectively for the higher and more varied purposes of which Homeric study is so largely susceptible.'

Mr. Gladstone, then, would have us study Homer as we study Aristotle and Thucydides, not only for the language, but for the philosophy, politics, and history. He would have us turn over his pages with nightly and daily handling, both as boys and as men. He does not regret that Homer is much read in the public schools.

‘It may be, that for boyhood Homer finds ample employment in his exterior and more obvious aspects.’

But that is not enough.

‘Neither boyhood nor manhood can read Homer effectively for all purposes at once. . . . The question therefore is, how best to divide the work between the periods of life severally best suited to the different parts of it.

‘Homer, if read at our public schools, is, and probably must be, read only, or in the main, for his diction and poetry (as commonly understood) even by the most advanced; while to those less forward he is little more than a mechanical instrument for acquiring the beginnings of real familiarity with the Greek tongue and its inflexions. If, therefore, he is to be read for his theology, history, ethics, politics, for his skill in the higher and more delicate parts of the poetic calling, for his never-ending lessons upon manners, arts, and society; if we are to study in him the great map of that humanity which he so wonderfully unfolds to our gaze, he must be read at the universities, and read with reference to his deeper treasures. He is second to none of the poets of Greece as the poet of boys; but he is far advanced before them all, even before Æschylus and Aristophanes, as the poet of men.’

Without pausing to dispute the truth of the last clause, with which, however, we are by no means prepared to concur, we would venture to observe that Mr. Gladstone’s book is one of the strongest possible refutations of his view of the desirableness of making use of Homer as an instrument of education in any other way than as he is used at present. Mr. Gladstone assumes the personality and unity of Homer. Mr. Grote considers that the ‘Iliad’ was developed from a shorter Achilleid, and that the ‘Odyssey’ was the work of another hand. Others look upon both poems as mere accretions of detached songs. Mr. Gladstone believes in the ‘historic aim’ of Homer. To Mr. Grote, the heroic age is ‘a past that was never present.’ Mr. Gladstone reads in Homer the history, politics, ethics, and theology of the Homeric age. But, as he would himself be bound to acknowledge, he does not read them plainly written in the text: he is obliged to have recourse to argument, to ingenuity, and to conjecture, to piece together the scattered members of the poet. But where a conclusion is the result of argument, ingenuity, and conjecture, the same instruments, handled by others, may hereafter produce a different or an opposite con-

clusion. That which is to be used as a text-book, and as a subject for examination, must, as regards its main lessons, be open and intelligible to all. At all events, all men ought to be agreed upon its general import. In proportion as its contents are made the matter of controversy, it ceases to be a fit instrument of education. There is one lamentable instance of this already in the Oxford schools. The First Decade of Livy has long been among the books which candidates for honours are expected to offer. The question of its authority has given rise to an infinite amount of controversy. Beaufort and Vico denied the historical character of the earlier part of the Roman history, more than a century ago. Niebuhr constructed an ideal Roman history and polity out of the text of Livy and the hints afforded by other writers, cementing together the fragments with a plentiful allowance of conjecture. Arnold endorsed the views of the great German historian. Ten years ago, an examination in Livy at Oxford was another name for an examination in Niebuhr. Dr. Ihne, adopting the same general principles of interpretation, has arrived at somewhat different results. Much in Niebuhr's system has appeared arbitrary to careful historical students, and a reaction from his influence has driven them into very different courses. On the one hand, Professor Newman, the general tendency of whose mind is not in the direction of credulity, believes in Romulus and Remus; on the other, Sir Cornwall Lewis believes in nothing before the Gallic war. Amid this conflict of opinions, the First Decade of Livy maintains its ground at Oxford, greatly to the confusion of tutor, student, and examiner. For the last few years the tendency of the schools has been to desert all commentators and illustrative historians, for the sake of close and literal conformity to the text of Livy. As is too often the case, scepticism has taken refuge in blind submission. We do not suppose that Mr. Gladstone would wish the study of Homer to run a similar course. But until men's minds are more at one with regard to the authenticity of the Homeric history, we do not see how it can be safe from the fate of Livy.

Thus, to specify one salient point among the many questions which beset the study of Homer, Mr. Gladstone does not wait to discuss the personality of Homer, or the unity of authorship in the two great poems. He assumes these points as already proved. They may be proved to the satisfaction of Mr. Gladstone; and he is, of course, at liberty to dispense with this preliminary discussion, by adopting and pointing to the arguments of those writers whose reasons he may think conclusive. But it is hardly allowable to treat the question as settled, so

long as one view of it is not universally or even generally accepted. Surely, however, these points should be clearly ascertained before any historical inferences which involve them are made a part of the common course of an academical education.

Perhaps we shall gain a clearer notion of the kind of intellectual food which Mr. Gladstone would desire to have provided for the higher students at our universities, by examining in detail some of the conclusions at which he has himself arrived. The two subjects of which his treatment is the most elaborate—and, we will venture to add, with regard to which he has arrived at the most questionable results—are those of the Greek ethnology and the Greek mythology. No subjects allow greater scope for conjectural ingenuity, none admit of the erection of a goodly superstructure upon a narrower basis, than those two to which Mr. Gladstone has severally allotted the greater part of his first and the whole of his second volume. His notions of the ethnology of Greece are of a kind which it is by no means easy to grasp, either considered in themselves or in relation to the general ethnology of Europe and Central and Southern Asia. In fact, Mr. Gladstone's views of general ethnology appear not only to be entirely second-hand, but to have been derived, without any verification, from a second-hand authority. We have no wish to detract from the merit of many of Dr. Donaldson's writings. They are of considerable value, as presenting to the ordinary English student the results of other men's investigations, condensed into a clear and compendious manual. But Dr. Donaldson's trustworthiness ceases when he ceases to be a faithful expositor of the opinions of others. A philologist who believes, or believed, that the Etruscans spoke a dialect of Norse, deserved to be placed in the same category with the late Sir W. Betham, who believed that they spoke pure Irish. We fear Mr. Gladstone, who rarely if ever quotes any other authority than Dr. Donaldson, and occasionally quotes him for statements which in these days scarcely need to be supported by references, has followed a linguistic *ignis fatuus* into more than one ethnological quagmire.

Mr. Gladstone, accepting the low and high German nations as types of the two great divisions of the Indo-European race, and considering the Medes and Persians as the several prototypes of the two groups, proceeds to make the following rather inexplicable statement—

‘ The population of this great tract (Iran) issued forth in the direction of the south-east, over the northern parts of India; and again towards

Asia Minor and Europe, in the direction of the north-west. Those who came first proceeded from Media, and supplied the base of what have been called the *Low-German nations* — *Sarmatians, Saxons, Getæ, (of Scythians or Goths.)*

This classification is exceedingly puzzling. We have always conceived that the Sarmatians were Slavonic: about the Getæ we have felt considerable doubt; but here we find them classified with the Saxons (who, after all, were probably a confederation rather than a race) among the Low-German nations. The Getæ, too, appear to be identified with the Scythians, and both with the Goths. The identification of the Goths and Getæ, probably an etymological mistake, is common in the later Roman historians. Whether the Scythians were Slaves or Tartars may be doubted, but they were not Low Germans. The Goths were not Scythians: they were Germans, but not Low Germans; on the contrary they formed the opposite extremity of the Teutonic race.

The Celtic races are divided into a 'low' and a 'high' group respectively. But Mr. Gladstone, arguing from various minute external indications, throws them wholly into the class of 'low' nations. 'The differences noted by Strabo between Celts and Germans correspond with the Homeric differences between Helli and Pelasgi.' What, after all, are the corresponding distinctions upon which so much stress is laid? Stature and fierceness on the one side, 'pacific habits, wealth, and advanced agriculture' on the other. A slight premiss to carry an ethnological conclusion! So, again, Mr. Gladstone's mode of dealing with gentile names is such as would connect almost any race in the world with any other. 'It is obvious to compare the names of Scythæ, Getæ, Goths, Massagetæ, Mæsi, Mysi, as carrying the marks of their own relationship.' The Scythians, then, are identified with the Mysians through the middle term of the Massagetæ, in which term names apparently, but probably accidentally, connected with each of the extremes, happen to be united. In fact the Massagetæ play the part of the 'diaper napkin' in the celebrated etymology. An even more astonishing piece of ethnographical lore remains to be mentioned, the interpretation and criticism of which we leave to our readers. 'The Medians,' says Mr. Gladstone, 'were civilly in a more advanced stage of social life, and were possessed of greater wealth,' than the Persians, 'but endowed with inferior energies. They are presumed to have been of the race of Ham, to have peopled Egypt, and to be akin to the ancient Sicani, to the Basques, the Esthonians, the Lapps, and the Finns of modern Europe. For the purposes of this inquiry,

they are to be regarded as in all likelihood *the immediate fountain-head of the Pelasgian races.*' It does not appear to us that Mr. Gladstone has taken pains to master what is known of the general ethnology of Europe, as a prerequisite to his inquiries into the early ethnology of Greece.

The great fact which stares in the face all investigators of the primitive history of Greece is the real or supposed existence of a Pelasgian race, who were extended in very early times over the whole or the greater part of what afterwards became Hellas. Niebuhr says, truly enough, that the nonsense which has been talked and written about the Pelasgi is quite sickening; but we are not at all sure that his own speculations have added much to our knowledge of the subject. Mr. Grote, in his trenchant manner of dealing with early history, will have none of them. Bishop Thirlwall, with characteristic good sense and discrimination, takes a course intermediate between the scepticism of some historians and the credulity of others. According to him the traditional Pelasgi represent, not so properly an early race in Hellas, as an earlier condition of the Hellenic race. He appears to consider the Hellenes, properly so called, as an energetic tribe who founded dynasties in Pelasgian communities, and partly by direct conquest, partly by indirect influence, extended their name and character over the entire peninsula. Mr. Gladstone adopts this view in the main, but carries it further. He seems to regard the Hellenes (unless we misinterpret him) as an element which has entered more largely into the composition of the later Greek race than would appear to have been the case, if we are to adopt Bishop Thirlwall's views. They founded, not merely dynasties, but an aristocracy. In either view they succeeded in giving their name to the whole country, but with greater or less right to do so, according to the hypothesis we may prefer to adopt. The Bishop of St. David's would represent the change of nomenclature as parallel to that by which Scotland acquired its present appellation; Mr. Gladstone would rather compare the change to that which took place in France, Burgundy, or Lombardy.

There is also, if we rightly understand the two views to which we are referring, a certain degree of difference between the ethnical relations of the Hellenes to the Pelasgians, as severally regarded by these writers. The Bishop does not appear to regard the conquering Hellenes as in any respect different from the conquered Pelasgi. The Hellenization of Greece was nothing more than the growth of predominant influence on the part of one among many tribes. The linguistic difference, if any, was merely dialectic. The so-called Pelasgi of historic

times spoke a peculiar language, but how far it differed from the recognised Hellenic dialects is not at all clear; and much obscurity hangs over all that concerns them. Mr. Gladstone's view, though vaguely expressed, is not very different from this, so far as words go. In fact, whenever he has to argue, as he does very freely, from the use of names, he treats the Hellenes and Pelasgi as virtually homogeneous. But when he comes to connect them with general ethnology, and to determine their position in the Indo-European system, he draws by implication a much sharper boundary-line between them. He allots the Pelasgi a place among the 'low' nations, connecting them with the Low Germans (or Celts?) on one hand, and the Medians on the other: while he connects the Hellenes, or as he prefers, with some reason, to call them, the Helli, with the Persians properly so called. In this, as in all his arguments upon kindred subjects, he relies not upon philological grounds, but upon the much more variable and accidental resemblances of manners and customs. The Helli came down from the Thessalian mountains upon the Pelasgi, the cultivators of the plain, just as the Persians, a highland race, conquered the Medians who inhabited the low countries to the north of them. This, with other scarcely stronger points of evidence, is made a reason for deriving the Helli from the mountaineers of Persia. Surely it is not necessarily to be expected, nay, it is not even probable, that emigrants from a mountainous region in Asia would first occupy a mountainous region in Europe. It is, to say the least, a far simpler supposition to conceive that the original Helli or Hellenes were one among the many kindred tribes spread over the Greek peninsula, who acquired in their rude mountain homes the courage and hardihood which enabled them subsequently to prevail over their fellow-countrymen.

The testimony of Homer is doubtless peculiarly valuable on this head. There can be little or no question that he presents to us, in the Catalogue of the Ships, a sufficiently accurate sketch of the geography of Greece as it existed in his own day. It is so minute that he must have spoken from certain knowledge; but it was a knowledge of Greece as he saw it, and not as it had been in the time of the real or imaginary Trojan war. In Homer we find mention made of both Hellenes and Pelasgi, but they do not occur as the appellations of the entire nation. In fact, there are Pelasgi in Europe and Asia, and they fight on the Trojan side as well as on that of the Greeks. The Hellenes are merely a particular race; but the local term, Hellas, is used, as Mr. Gladstone has shown, with considerable latitude. Perhaps it may have taken in the whole of Greece north of the Corinthian

gulf. Only three terms are ever applied to the entire nation, or, more properly speaking, to the entire army before Troy. The name *Danai*, is applied, as Mr. Gladstone proves, to the Greeks considered from a military and not from a national point of view. He considers, with much probability, that it was an old heroic name, used by Homer mainly for the use of poetical effect. The Greeks are also called Argives and Achæans. Mr. Gladstone seems to think that the Achæans, properly the name of a tribe, were, generally speaking, the Hellenic aristocracy. The Achæans, then, were probably a branch of the Hellenes, in whom the aggressive disposition of that race was principally manifested. He supposes that when the Greek army is spoken of as Achæi, the leaders are mainly intended. In this, as in much else, Mr. Gladstone has, as we think, shown a disposition to ingenious conjecture beyond the limits which caution would impose. It may, however, be conceded, that the Argive and Achæan name was extended beyond its proper limits through the medium of dynastic influences.

The truth is that a great amount of labour and ingenuity expended upon the puzzling subject of Greek ethnology, has led men, after all, to very few satisfactory results. Comparative philology, the testimony of inscriptions, mythological considerations, and geographical probability, appear to make it, at all events, a reasonable supposition, that a group of nations nearly akin to each other was extended over a great part of the Italian peninsula, Thrace, Macedonia, Greece, and the islands, and at least the western portion of Asia Minor. More than this cannot be affirmed with certainty, nor is so much entirely free from doubt. But there are also indications of a bipartite arrangement in this group of nations, corresponding in some degree to that which has been already mentioned as existing in the case of the Teutonic and other races. The Greek language bears obvious marks of belonging to the 'high' division; the Latin, or one at least of the languages which it represents (assuming it to be a compound), attaches itself to the 'low' group. It is of course quite possible that similar divisions may have subsisted anciently in either peninsula, and that more recent phenomena may have been the results of the conquest and fusion of races. In this sense the Helli may have been 'high,' and the Pelasgi 'low;' but we doubt if there is sufficient evidence before us to come to any satisfactory conclusion on these obscure and doubtful questions.

To pass from the vexed question of Hellenic and Pelasgian ethnology to the even more obscure and difficult subject of Greek

mythology, we may observe, in the outset, that Mr. Gladstone, by adhering to an almost disused nomenclature, from which he ought in the present instance, if anywhere, to have departed, has lost sight of one class of phenomena, which, skilfully handled, might have led to important results. Mr. Gladstone observes—

‘ Though sharing the dissatisfaction of others at the established preference given among us to the Latin names of deities originally Greek, and at some part of our orthography for Greek names, I have thought it best to adhere in general to the common custom, and only to deviate from it where a special object was in view. I fear that diversity, and even confusion, are more likely to arise than any benefit, from efforts at reform, made by individuals, and without the advantage either of authority or of a clear principle, as a groundwork for general consent. I am here disposed to say, “ οὐκ ἀγαθὸν πολυκοιρανίη ;” and again with Wordsworth,

“ Me this unchartered freedom tires.” ’

With the matter of orthography we are not at present concerned; but as regards our mythological nomenclature, the preference of which Mr. Gladstone most justly complains, although formerly established among us, can no longer claim the consideration due to a vested interest. We are inclined to believe that more scholars will be found in the present day to speak of Zeus and Athene than of Jupiter and Minerva. We think it was quite open to Mr. Gladstone to adopt the course for which he expresses his own preference, and we are far from supposing it possible that it would have given rise to the ‘ confusion ’ which he deprecates. On the contrary, we believe that the danger of ‘ confusion ’ lies on the other side. When men habitually speak of Greek deities by Latin names, they are pretty sure to fall into the trap of assuming the identity of the Greek deity with the Latin divinity with whom the former is supposed to correspond. Mr. Gladstone complains of our using the ‘ Latin names of deities originally Greek.’ Is it not too much to assume that the deities in question *are* originally Greek? Assuming the identity of Jupiter and Juno on the one hand, with Zeus and Here on the other, may they not be part of the common heritage of the Græco-Italian race, call it Pelasgian, or by what name you will? Or again, is it not too much to take for granted that the divinities which appear to correspond have in every case any connexion beyond that of resemblance? The Roman mythology, like the Roman literature, drew its inspiration from Greece. Greek myths were transferred to the religion of Rome, and, indeed, into that of Etruria also. Where the name of a god recognised in Rome is obviously of Greek origin, we may assume that the god and his attributes were transplanted wholesale. Such was apparently the case with Apollo, Bacchus, Latona. But where the name is totally

different, and bears every mark of being indigenous, we are driven to suppose, either that the attributes and accompanying legends of Greek divinities were attached to native Italian gods, who presented some point of similarity, or that the same legendary personages, who figured in the traditions of various branches of the race, acquired in Italy different names from those by which they were known in Greece. Venus, Vulcan, Minerva, Mars (?), are instances of the class to which we refer. It is, however, both possible and extremely probable that each of the alternatives to which we have been reduced may be partially true. The same legendary person may have two names in some cases, and the same attributes may have been assigned to two legendary persons in others. It is scarcely necessary to observe that this partial resemblance subsisting between the Greek and Italian mythologies is a phenomenon which, carefully examined, might have been fruitful in results. But Mr. Gladstone has not merely declined the examination, but by using language which implies the absolute identity of the Greek and Roman religion, or, more properly speaking, merges the latter in the former, has put the possibility of such an examination entirely out of sight. This is the more remarkable, as he expresses a doubt whether the gods of the Trojan mythology had in every case anything in common with the Grecian deities beyond their names. He raises a question whether the Zeus who had his habitation on Mount Ida, had attributes similar to those of the Zeus who dwelt on Mount Olympus. And he believes that he can recognise various distinctions between the Greek and Trojan conceptions of the composition of the celestial court. Assuming for the sake of argument that such differences existed, we do not believe that it would enter into the mind or purpose of Homer to record them. We conceive that he would present his hearers with the mythology recognised by himself and them, and would take no account of differences of belief existing among other nations. But without stopping to criticise Mr. Gladstone's method in this part of his subject, we cannot avoid calling attention to the inconsistency between the care he has taken to adjust the relations between the mythologies of Greece and Asia Minor, and his absolute neglect of the mythology of ancient Italy.

The most remarkable and characteristic feature of Mr. Gladstone's treatment of the Homeric theology, is his discovery in it of scattered traces of a primitive revelation. A close examination of the Olympian conclave has led him to the conclusion that some of its members bear more patent marks of divinity, and are of earlier origin than others. Some of the Greek gods

are mere deifications of elements, powers, passions, and the like. Others have not this character at all, or possess it only in a partial degree. Where they have this mixed character, they are generally (as Mr. Gladstone expresses it) 'provided with a secondary.' Thus Neptune (we use our author's nomenclature) has a secondary in Nereus. The latter is a mere deification of the material sea; therefore Neptune, although the sea is his proper province, is something more than that. Minerva, accordingly as we regard her as the goddess of war, of wisdom, or of art, finds her secondary in Mars, Mercury, or Vulcan. In fact, the assemblage of heterogeneous attributes which distinguishes Minerva and Apollo, among others, marks them off from divinities invested with more definite and simple characteristics. The latter are designated by Mr. Gladstone deities of invention; the former, deities of tradition. This distinction has been well and carefully worked out. Mr. Gladstone's arguments appear to us perfectly convincing; so far as they prove that his so-called traditive deities were far more ancient than the rest, and that they were regarded as in many respects possessing higher attributes.

But then this question remains to be solved: What is the origin of these traditive deities? At this point we find ourselves compelled to diverge from Mr. Gladstone. He views the most ancient pagan traditions as the fragments of a primitive revelation. Without entirely and absolutely denying the possibility of such a thing, we find it far easier to look upon them as the relics of an earlier invention. Mr. Gladstone's main argument is of the same curious kind which we have before had occasion to notice. He shifts the *onus probandi* from himself on those who deny the patriarchal origin of his traditive divinities. After speaking of the germs of Christian doctrine, the fore-shadowings of a belief in the Trinity and a Messiah, which he finds in the primitive creed, as gathered from the early books of the Old Testament, as well as from Jewish tradition, he proceeds—

'If such traditions existed, and if the laws which guide historical inquiry require or lead us to suppose that the forefathers of the Greeks must have lived within their circle, then the burden of proof must lie not so properly with those who assert that the traces of them are to be found in the earliest, that is, the Homeric form of the Greek mythology, as with those who deny it. What became of those old traditions? They must have decayed and disappeared, not by a sudden process, but by a gradual accumulation of the corrupt accretions, in which at length they were so completely interred as to be invisible and inaccessible. Some period, therefore, there must have been, at which they would remain clearly perceptible, though in conjunction with much corrupt matter. Such a period

might be made the subject of record, and if such there were, we might naturally expect to find it in the oldest known work of the ancient literature.'

In order to render it lawful for Mr. Gladstone to escape from the burden of proof, and to impose it upon his antagonists, two conditions are requisite. First, that it should appear that the traditions which he attributes to the patriarchal age were clearly, explicitly, and generally believed. Secondly, that neither lapse of time, nor other circumstances, had created such a gulf between the patriarchs and Homer as would be impassable to anything so frail and impalpable as oral tradition. Mr. Gladstone's own words indicate the necessity of these conditions, while they do not state it nearly as strongly as the case requires. '*If* such traditions existed, and *if* the laws which guide historical inquiry require or lead us to suppose that the forefathers of the Greeks must have lived within their circle,'—then, and not otherwise, he expects us to accept his conclusion concerning them.

What, then, are the traditions which he finds in the earlier Scriptures, and which he believes to have been transmitted to the Greek mythology?

'We may venture rudely to sum up these principal traditions of the first ages as follows:—

'First, with respect to the Deity.

'1. The unity and supremacy of the Godhead.

'2. A combination with this unity of a Trinity, in which Trinity the several Persons, in whatever way their personality may be understood, and whatever distinctions may obtain between them, are in some way of coequal honour.

'Secondly, with respect to the Redeemer or Messiah.

'1. A Redeemer from the curse of death, invested with full humanity, by whom the divine kingdom was to be vindicated and established in despite of its enemies.

'2. A Wisdom, which is personal as well as divine, the highest and first in order, concerned in the foundation and continuing government of the world. This is the Wisdom which "the Lord possessed from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the world was." "I wisdom dwell with prudence; and find out knowledge and witty inventions." "This is with all flesh according to his gift; and he hath given her to them that love him."

'3. The connection with the Redeemer with our race through his descent from the woman.

'Thirdly, with respect to the Evil One.

'1. A rebellion of great angels or powers against the Supreme Being; the defeat of the rebels, and their being cast down into the abyss.

'2. The going forth among men of a power who tempts them to their destruction.

'A tradition of minor moment, but clearly declared in the earliest Scripture, may be added, namely—

'The announcement of the rainbow, as a token which was to convey an assurance or covenant from God to man, with respect to the annual order of nature; an order on which the continuance of the human race depends.'

Postponing our consideration of the last point, let us consider how much of all this may be found in the Book of Genesis, written so that he that runneth may read it. For in the first place, we cannot admit the evidence of the later books of Scripture, or of Rabbinical tradition, in a matter of this kind. As the fulness of time approached, the mysteries of the Christian revelation were more and more accepted, although by anticipation. And, secondly, that which is not plainly written, and cannot be shown to have been generally believed, is, as we have already shown, scarcely in point with reference to the present purpose. Now it cannot be said that there are any plain indications of the belief in a Trinity, or even of a plurality of the divine Persons in the patriarchal age. The instances which are commonly alleged are so ambiguous or shadowy, perhaps so intentionally obscure, that even if they prove that this great mystery was partially revealed from the beginning, they cannot prove that it was so generally received as to have been likely to survive among pagan nations. Again, with regard to the supposed Messianic traditions, it is easy for us to interpret the promise of the 'seed of the woman,' but it is by no means so evident that the immediate descendants of those to whom it was made, accepted it in anything like the sense which we now put upon it. We fail to find a rebellion of angels in Genesis; but the existence of a tempter, whether spiritual or animal we will not now dispute, is stated there plainly enough.

What have we left then? The Unity of the Godhead, the Tempter, the Rainbow! It is certain that the former belief appears to underlie all heathen theology. In that of Greece it is peculiarly the case. Polytheism would seem to have been developed out of monotheism, and to be perpetually tending to return to it. The later poets continually speak of an abstract Θεός. The Æschylean Zeus is even more supreme than his Homeric prototype. Either a true tradition, or an unconscious rationalism, was perpetually struggling with the popular creed. It may possibly have been the latter. Mr. Gladstone, like many other writers on mythology, does not allow enough to the natural play of the human mind. Regarded in this light, his identification of Ate with the scriptural tempter, appears to vanish. We would regard the Ate of Homer, and of the later Greek mythology, not as a relic of primitive revelation, but as an embodiment of spiritual experience. Then again as to the

Rainbow, which Mr. Gladstone finds in Iris, the messenger-goddess, the correspondence, when fairly examined, shrinks into a very small compass. The Rainbow was set forth as a divine token. Iris, the personification of the Rainbow, is the messenger of heaven. There is nothing natural, says Mr. Gladstone, in the mythological connection between the Rainbow and the messenger. The attributes are heterogeneous, and point, therefore, to primitive tradition. We find in the Mosaic account the key which the ancient Greeks had lost. In our opinion, however, there is a natural connection between the Rainbow and the idea of a messenger. Celestial phenomena have been supposed in all ages to be tokens of the divine will. The Rainbow, as a phenomenon of frequent occurrence, and yet among the most striking which can be conceived,—its geometrical form, and regular gradations of hue, standing out in strong contrast to the usual freedom and apparent irregularity of nature,—would naturally be looked upon as the ambassador of the Olympian court; just as a comet has always had the reputation of being a celestial envoy extraordinary.

We are, therefore, but little disposed to seek for the fragments of a primitive revelation in the Homeric poems, neither do we believe that we are likely to find them there. Mr. Gladstone, indeed, expects his theory to satisfy not only those who accept the Mosaic revelation, but even those who consider themselves at liberty to criticise it as they would any other primitive record.

‘The general proposition, that we may expect to find the relics of scriptural traditions in the heroic age of Greece, though it leads, if proved, to important practical results, is independent even of a belief in those traditions, as they stand in the scheme of revealed truth. They must be admitted to have been facts on earth, even by those who would deny them to be facts of heavenly origin, in the shape in which Christendom receives them: and the question immediately before us is one of pure historical probability. The descent of mankind from a single pair, the lapse of that pair from original righteousness, are apart from and ulterior to it. We have traced the Greek nation to a source, and along a path of migration, which must in all likelihood have placed its ancestry, at some point or points, in close local relations with the scenes of the earliest Mosaic records: the retentiveness of that people equalled its receptiveness, and its close and fond association with the past made it prone indeed to incorporate novel matter into its religion, but prone also to keep it there after its incorporation.’

We confess that this argument looks to us very much like an afterthought, taking the form of an answer to a possible objection from a quarter of which, in the first instance, no account had been taken. However that may be, the answer is only valid upon the supposition that the ancestors of the Homeric

Greeks had at some time or other come into contact with a race holding the primitive creed, a portion of which they are supposed to have incorporated. But as those who do not accept the Mosaic revelation would assign a much later date to the Mosaic records than the generally received one, and, we presume, than the latest period that can be reasonably allowed for the supposed contact between the Hebrew nation and the ancestors of the Greeks, it does not appear to us that Mr. Gladstone's argument does hold good, independently of a belief in divine revelation.

The discussion of this argument, however, opens a question to which we have already adverted. Even if it were probable *à priori*, that the primitive traditions which Mr. Gladstone believes that he has found in Homer, did exist for some ages in the midst of a mass of surrounding heathenism, shall we say that it is also probable that they would continue to exist in the Homeric age? Tradition is rapidly formed, and as rapidly dissolves, until it is fixed by the use of letters. Comparatively ancient as he is, Homer is modern as compared with Abraham or even with Moses: and it is difficult to imagine that oral tradition should survive the revolutions of five hundred or a thousand years.

Perhaps it is time to furnish the reader with some examples of Mr. Gladstone's theory of primitive tradition. At the same time we must confess that we shrink from stating some of his conclusions. No man can read the book without feeling that its author is a man of deeply religious and reverential mind; but his theory has led him to speak of sacred things and persons in a context, which, to those who cannot receive that theory, will unavoidably seem ludicrous. We shall, therefore, refrain from making any extracts of this kind, beyond those which may appear necessary to illustrate the author's method of reasoning.

The traditional conceptions of a Messiah, according to Mr. Gladstone, have been divided between Apollo and Minerva. Apollo represents the Redeemer and Deliverer from the powers of death and evil, while Minerva is a reminiscence of the Eternal Wisdom. Again—

'The Messianic tradition, first divided between Apollo and the great Minerva, is now subdivided between him and his sister Diana, who forms a kind of supplement to his divinity. The bow and arrows, the symbol which they bear in common, marks the original union in character, out of which their twin peculiarities had grown.'

But then a question naturally suggests itself—What has the terrible clang of his silver bow to do with the milder characteristics of Apollo, as a 'saviour from death?'

‘This singular and solemn relation of Apollo and Diana to death appears to have an entirely exclusive character attaching to it. There is a clear distinction between death inflicted by the symbolical arrows of these twin divinities, which are the symbols of an invisible power, and death resulting from physical or any other palpable causes, whether it be violent, or what we term natural.’

To these twin deities, then, according to Mr. Gladstone, the Greeks attributed that which, in the religious formula of our coroners’ inquests, is termed ‘Death by the visitation of God.’ But he argues from certain isolated passages, that it was especially a sudden and painless death that was so attributed. Into the grounds of that conclusion we shall not now enter; but mark how it helps him out of a difficulty—

‘In considering what may have been the traditional source of these remarkable attributes of the children of Latona, we should tread softly and carefully, for we are on very sacred ground. But we seem to see in them the traces of the form of One who, as an all-conquering king, was to be terrible and destructive to his enemies, but who was also, on behalf of mankind, *to take away the sting from death, and to change its iron band for a thread of silken slumber.*’

An even more ingenious, and even more extraordinary piece of ratiocination remains to be quoted. The Apollo of later mythology is more or less identified with the Sun. In Homer, and in some later writers, they are absolutely distinct. Yet many of the otherwise incongruous attributes of Apollo agree in suiting the Sun. He is the lord of light and life and health; the all-seeing, and therefore omniscient and prophetic god; the archer, who destroys with his golden shafts as well life, as what is noxious to life. The number of common attributes possessed by Apollo with the Sun led to their final identification, or, more strictly speaking, to the absorption of the latter in the former.

‘In this view, the mythological absorption of the Sun in Apollo, is a most striking trait of the ancient mythology; and it even recalls to mind that sublime representation of the prophet: “The sun shall be no more thy light by day, neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee; but the Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory.”’

The greater gods of the Hellenic mythology are, according to Mr. Gladstone, not mere personifications of powers of nature; but where they have been more or less identified with powers of nature, it is, so to speak, *de congruo*. His view of the relation of Apollo to the Sun, which we have just noted, is perhaps the most remarkable instance of his theory in this respect. The fact of their ultimate convergence is an evidence to him that

they were originally distinct. It does not appear to have occurred to him as possible that these conceptions may have diverged from the same origin, only to converge at last. We have already intimated that he has proved beyond controversy that some of the higher deities were handed down by an ancient tradition. But we have also intimated our belief that their origin must only be referred to a more ancient invention. The elemental character of Apollo was forgotten in his personality. Then a new Sun-god arose, hereafter to be blended in the popular conception with the original Sun-god, Apollo. It is the more remarkable that Mr. Gladstone has taken no notice of this possible history of Apollo, as he has accurately detailed a precisely parallel process in the case of Juno. 'Her Greek name, *Ἥρα*, is, I apprehend, a form of *ἔρα*, the earth; and in her first form she probably represented one of its oriental impersonations.' But, in course of time, Mr. Gladstone tells us—

'The conception of the bride of the chief deity was disengaged from brute matter, and uplifted into a divinity having for its office the care and government of a civilised and associated people. The Homeric Juno may almost be defined as the goddess of Greece. There rose up in her place, like a low mist of evening, from the ground, the comparatively obscure Homeric *Γαῖα*, who has no life or function except in connection with the idea of vengeance to be executed upon the wicked; and this she probably derives from the belief, that the rebel spirits were punished in the subterranean prisons, of which she was as it were, by physical laws, the necessary keeper.'

And again—

'Earth was heavy, inactive, and was the prime representative of matter as opposed to mind. Hence the personality of the tradition was severed by the Greeks from its material groundwork; and earth, the nature-power, remained beneath, while the figure of Juno, relieved from this incumbrance, and invested with majestic and vigorous attributes, soared aloft and took the place of eldest sister and first wife of Jupiter. Hence doubtless it is that the *Γαῖα* of Homer is so inanimate and weakling; because she was but the exhausted residue of a tradition, from which the higher life had escaped.'

This is a good specimen of Mr. Gladstone's admirable treatment of the Homeric mythology, whenever he escapes from the bondage of his leading ideas. Subtle, discriminating, eloquent, when left to himself, he becomes powerless as soon as he is drawn within the charmed circles of primitive tradition and of the 'historic aim' of Homer. The clear-sightedness which he exhibits in criticising the history of Juno, has been dazzled to blindness by the supposed Messianic attributes which surround the head of Apollo. But, allowing for necessary deductions to be made on the score of subservience to his theory, the mytho-

logical volume is excellent. The criticisms on the characters of gods and men are the products and the evidences of a high tone of sentiment. We would especially call attention to the valuable protest against the pernicious positivism of Mr. Grote, who virtually denies a moral sense to the Greeks of the heroic age and their immediate posterity, and considers that the very ideas of good and evil became attached in later times to the words by which they are ordinarily denoted.

'Mr. Grote says, that "the primitive import" of the words ἀγαθός, ἰσθλός, and κακός, relates "to power and not to worth;" and that the ethical meaning of them is a later growth, which "hardly appears until the discussions raised by Socrates, and prosecuted by his disciples." I ask permission to protest against whatever savours of the idea that any Socrates whatever was the patentee of that sentiment of right and wrong, which is the most precious part of the patrimony of mankind. The movement of Greek morality with the lapse of time was chiefly downward and not upward. It is admitted, that what we may call the dynamical sense of the epithets has held its ground in later times along with their ethical signification: the important question to be determined is, whether the later signification was an improvement introduced by civilisation into the code of barbarism, or whether it indicates a principle of human nature on its better, which is also its weaker side, and one which we see, all along the course of history, struggling to assert itself against the tyrannous invasion of other propensities and powers.

'The word ἰσθλός is found in combination with what is absolutely vicious, in the remarkable case of Autolycus:

μητρὸς ἐῆς πατέρ' ἰσθλόν, ὃς ἀνθρώπους ἐκέκαστο
κλεπτοσύνη θ' ὀρκῶ τε.

But the meaning of ἰσθλός appears to be, one who excels; the application of it to Autolycus is not at all unlike the commendation of the unjust steward; and the epithet did not in the later Greek acquire any essentially different force, or any exclusive appropriation to moral excellence.'

* * * * *

'But as to the words ἀγαθός and κακός, the case is far more clear; and here I ask, can it be shown that Homer ever applies the word ἀγαθός to that which is morally bad? or the word κακός to that which is morally good? If it can, *cadit quæstio*; if it cannot, then we have advanced a considerable way in proving the ethical signification. For it is on all hands admitted, that besides their proper sense, ἀγαθός and κακός, like our *good* and *bad*, have a derivative meaning, in which they are employed to denote what is agreeable, or what is pre-eminent in its kind, and the reverse respectively; qualities which bear an analogy to goodness on the one hand, and to badness on the other, according to the universal testimony of human speech. Now, if the use of this derivative sense stops short, in the case of ἀγαθός, when it comes to border on what is positively bad, and in the case of κακός, when it comes to touch upon what is positively good, there must be a reason for the abrupt cessation at that point, of the function of the words; and it can be none other than that Nature herself revolts from a contradiction in terms; as we never say a good villain or a bad saint. But the contradiction would not exist unless the ethical sense were inherent in the words.'

The third and concluding volume of the Homeric studies is divided into four chapters, devoted severally to the discussion of the Homeric politics, of the character and institutions of the Trojans, of the geography of the 'Odyssey,' and of the literary character of the two great poems. We cannot afford to dwell at length upon any of these topics: but we must remark that while the results at which the author has arrived in this volume are in many respects more trustworthy than is the case with its predecessors, the conception of an 'historic aim' is predominant in the first three chapters of the book to an even greater degree than in other parts of the work. Although we are not a little startled to find the writings of Homer described as 'an admirable school of polity,' we think that Mr. Gladstone has made good the claim of the heroic politics to the possession of at least the germs of constitutional freedom. He has shown that 'along with an outline of sovereignty and public institutions highly patriarchal, we find the full, constant, and effective use of two great instruments of government, since and still so extensively in abeyance among mankind, namely, publicity and persuasion.' Into the details of Mr. Gladstone's arguments we do not feel ourselves called upon to enter. We think, however, that he has proved his point, as against Mr. Grote, who concedes to the Greeks of the Homeric age nothing more than a mere phantasmagoria of liberty. 'Publicity indeed . . . essentially pervades the whole system, but it is a publicity without consequences; for the people, when they have heard, simply obey the orders of the king.' In opposition to this view, Mr. Gladstone seems to have shown that the deliberative assemblies of the heroic age were a reality. The *ἀγορὴ* was convened, not merely to hear the royal proclamation, but to debate and decide upon the course to be pursued. It is true that the speakers are mainly kings and leaders, but this is in accordance with the general experience of mixed assemblies.

Mr. Gladstone is inferior to no orator in England, and stands unrivalled as a master of debate. He is, therefore, especially qualified to pronounce an opinion on the character of the speeches delivered in these primitive assemblies.

'If we examine those orations, we shall, I think, find not only that they contain specimens of transcendent eloquence which have never been surpassed, but likewise that they evince the most comprehensive knowledge, and the most varied and elastic use of all the resources of the art.'

After speaking of direct assaults, occurring in speeches of his two great ideals, Achilles and Ulysses, Mr. Gladstone continues—

‘ But of assaults in flank, Homer is quite as great a master. He shows a peculiar genius for that which is properly called repartee ; for that form of speech, which flings back upon the opponent the stroke of his own weapon, or on the suppliant the plea of his own prayer. There was one Antimachus, a Trojan, who had grown wealthy, probably by the bribes which he received from Paris, in consideration of his always opposing, in the Trojan Agorè, the restoration of Helen to the Greeks. His sons are mastered by Agamemnon in the field. Aware that he had a thirst for money, they cry, “ Quarter, Agamemnon ! we are the sons of rich Antimachus : he will pay you well for our lives.” “ If,” replies the king, “ you are the sons of that Antimachus, who, when Menelaus came as envoy to Troy, advised to take and slay him, here and now shall ye expiate your father’s infamy.” Compare with this the yet sharper turn of Ulysses on Leiodes in the *Odyssey* : “ Spare me, Ulysses, I have done no ill in your halls ; I have stopped what ill I could ; I was but augur to the suitors.” Then follows the stern reply : “ If thou dost avow that thou art augur to the suitors, then often in prayer must thou have augured my destruction, and desired my wife for thine own ; wherefore thou shalt not escape the painsome bed of death.”

‘ But the weapons of sarcasm, from the lightest to the weightiest, are wielded by Homer with almost greater effect than any others. As a sample of the former, I take the speech of Phoenix when he introduces, by way of parable, the Legend of Meleager. “ As long as Meleager fought, all was well ; but when rage took possession of him—which (I would just observe) now and then bewilders other great minds also—then,” and so onward.

“ But for the great master of this art, Homer has chosen Achilles. As with his invectives he grinds to powder, so with the razor-edge of the most refined irony he cuts his way in a moment to the quick. When Greece, in the person of the envoy-kings, is at his feet, and he has spurned them away, he says, “ No, I will go home : you can come and see me depart—if you think it worth your while.”

ὄψαι, ἣν ἐθέλησθα καὶ αἶ κέν τοι τὰ μεμήλη.

‘ The eye can only see that which it brings with it the power of seeing.’ The edge of this irony is so very sharp, that we fancy even the wise Ulysses, to whom it was addressed, can scarcely have felt the wound. The dullard Ajax must have been utterly insensible to it. For our own part, we are free to confess that we should not have seen the wit of the four passages just cited, without the aid of Mr. Gladstone’s commentary ; and, as it is, we must in a great degree take his word for it.

The chapter entitled *Ilios*, which is occupied with the consideration of the institutions peculiar to the city rightly so called, and of the character of its inhabitants, contains much that is valuable and suggestive. But it shares the character of over-refinement which distinguishes so many of the details in Mr. Gladstone’s volumes. Disbelieving in the ‘historic aim’ of Homer, we cannot admit that it was his intention to paint the manners of Troy. We conceive that it was his intention to sketch

a background for the Grecian army, and that he drew upon his imagination for the details. Mr. Gladstone thinks that oratory, which has been mentioned as characteristic of the Grecian heroes, was not used by the Trojans in their deliberative assemblies: they simply expressed their own opinions, without attempting to persuade others. Antenor proposes, in an important public meeting, the restoration of Helen to the Greeks, in a speech of six lines, the last of which 'is marked as surplusage with the *obelos*.' Paris replies in a speech of eight lines: 'four of them are given to the announcement of his intentions, and four to the abuse of Antenor.' Mr. Gladstone infers, from the short speeches put by Homer into the mouths of his Trojans, that they could not make longer ones. Is it not more reasonable to imagine that Homer sketched his background slightly and in faint colours of set purpose? According to Mr. Gladstone's view, he has finished the creepers and lichens on the wall, or the duck-weed and water-lilies in the standing pool, with the laborious accuracy which, as we believe, a great artist reserves for his principal figures. We are unwilling to rank Homer among the P. R. B. The truth is, that he worked with the materials with which he was familiar. The Paynim of Ariosto do not differ widely from his Paladins; and the Greek and Trojan heroes of Homer stand upon much the same level; the difference being apparently such only as were the result of a poetical necessity. Far different was the conception of the Trojan character in the mind of the later Greeks. To the tragedians, Troy was the type of the East; and their notions of the East were mainly formed from the Persians of their own time. The Trojans are foreigners; their language is unintelligible; they delight in barbaric splendour and luxury. When the Æschylean Agamemnon refuses to lead his triumphal procession along a path strewn with purple tapestry, the queen inquires how Priam would have acted in a like case:—

ΚΛΥΤ. Τί δ' ἂν δοκεῖ σοι Πρίαμος, εἰ τὰδ' ἤνυσεν;
ΑΓΑΜ. Ἐν ποικίλοις ἂν κάρτα μοι βῆναι δοκεῖ.

In this case, Mr. Gladstone appears to us to have departed from his grand principles, and to have reflected upon Homer the ideas of a later age.

One hundred and seventeen pages are occupied in discussing the 'outer geography' of the 'Odyssey.' We should be as willing to devote a similar amount of labour to the endeavour to fix the site of Brobdignag, or ascertain the latitude of Nephelococcygia. Mr. Gladstone shows, with great truth, that it is use-

less to attempt the identification of Ogygia or *Ææa* with any known islands on the face of the globe. Yet he thinks he can put his finger on the precise spots in the map of Europe which, according to the conception of Homer, they ought to have occupied.

‘Though we do no violence to probability in imputing to the geography of the “*Odyssey*” any amount of variance, however great, from actual nature, yet we should sorely offend against reason if we supposed that Homer had constructed a route so elaborate and detailed without laying it out before his own mental vision, and presenting it to that of his hearers, after the fashion of something like a map.’

The first map we read of in history is the one which Aristagoras carried with him to Sparta. Mr. Gladstone, of course, does not mean that Homer had ever seen one. But if he had never seen an actual map, it is not easy to understand how he could have had a map in his mind’s eye. Even educated people in the present day, instructed in ‘geography and the use of the globes,’ often find it extremely difficult to conceive the relative positions of various points on the surface of the earth. Many a man who knows the shortest road to the next market-town, could not point out the direction in which it lies with the slightest degree of accuracy. The geographical sense is wanting; and where it has not been at all educated, as must have been the case in the time of Homer, we cannot conceive its presence. The geographical inaccuracy of Shakspeare is proverbial; why should we attribute greater carefulness to Homer?

Mr. Gladstone is unquestionably most happy, and most at home, in literary criticism. The fourth and concluding chapter is the most satisfactory portion of the third volume, and, indeed, of the whole work. It is a labour of love. He has a thorough and hearty appreciation of Homer. His refined taste enables him to detect beauties which might have escaped the common eye, although his enthusiasm may have also led him to see them where they do not exist. The delineations of character are conceived in an excellent spirit. That of Helen, as represented by Mr. Gladstone, is peculiarly beautiful and touching. The last three sections have appeared, in substance, in the pages of the ‘*Quarterly Review*.’ Their author is especially felicitous as a reviewer, and this is accordingly, on the whole, the most elaborately written part of the chapter. We should exceed our limits if we were to attempt to point out either its beauties or its errors. The latter, although it is by no means free from instances of hasty inference, are less numerous than in other

portions of the book in proportion as it proceeds less upon groundless assumptions. The more Mr. Gladstone attempts to prove, the less he generally succeeds in proving. We shall content ourselves with quoting, for the benefit of our readers to whom eloquence is a delight, the brilliant peroration of the section and of the work—

‘ We have now walked in the train and in the light of the great poet of antiquity, through a long, yet, so far at least as he is a party, not a barren circuit. We have begun with his earliest legends, faintly glimmering upon us from the distance of a hundred generations. We have seen the creations of his mind live and move, breathe and almost burn before us, under the power and magic of his art. We have found him to have shaped a great and noble mould of humanity, separate indeed from our experience, but allied through a thousand channels with our sympathies. We have seen the greatness of our race at one and the same time adorned with the simplicity of its childhood, and built up in the strength of its maturity. We have seen it unfold itself in the relations of society and sex, in peace and in war, in things human and things divine, and have examined it under the varying lights of comparison and contrast. We have seen how the memory of that great age, and of its yet greater poet, has been cherished : how the trust which he bequeathed to mankind has been acknowledged, and yet how imperfectly it has been discharged. We have striven to trace the fate of some among his greatest creations ; and having accompanied them down the stream of years even to our own day, it is full time to part. Nemesis must not find me,

ἢ νῦν δηθύνοντ', ἢ ὕστερον αὖθις ἴοντα.

To pass from the study of Homer to the ordinary business of the world is to step out of a palace of enchantment into the cold gray light of a polar day. But the spells, in which this sorcerer deals, have no affinity with that drug from Egypt, which drowns the spirit in effeminate indifference : rather they are like the *φάρμακον ἐσθλόν*, the remedial specific, which, freshening the understanding by contact with the truth and strength of nature, should both improve its vigilance against deceit and danger, and increase its vigour and resolution for the discharge of duty.’

The recital of Mr. Gladstone’s conclusion leads appropriately to our own. In the course of this notice we have sufficiently indicated our opinion of the manner in which the writer has treated his subject as regards both the leading topics and the details. So far as the former are concerned, we cannot disavow our belief that the book is a failure. The author has written under the influence of certain ruling ideas, which have not only given its direction to the main argument, but have lent a colour to reasonings of a character almost puerile. In spite of these prominent and obvious faults, the work contains not only such beauties and excellences as cannot fail to mark anything which proceeds from Mr. Gladstone, but also a vast amount of really valuable and interesting speculation with regard to the writings of Homer. No careful student of these ancient records of primi-

tive history, or of the history of literature, should decline the labour of reading it. He will find that labour relieved by the sustained tone of brilliant diction, and repaid by the thoroughly Christian and chivalrous temper and feeling by which it is characterized. The deficiencies lie on the surface, and few scholars in these days will be misled by them: the merits lie deeply imbedded in the work, and no scholar worthy of the name will refuse to acknowledge them. The results of Mr. Gladstone's speculations are, so to speak, accidental, but they are not therefore the less precious. As the laws of planetary motion may have been evolved in the vain endeavour to cast a horoscope, and as principles of chemical analysis have been discovered in the search for the philosopher's stone, so Mr. Gladstone, in looking for a primitive history and the traces of a patriarchal revelation in the works of Homer, has been led to true as well as to false conclusions. It is unfortunate that the true conclusions are subordinate to his main purpose, while the false conclusions are those which he is seeking to establish.

III.

NOVELS BY SIR EDWARD BULWER LYTTON.

1. *What will he do with it?* By Sir E. B. Lytton. Blackwood.
2. *My Novel.* Blackwood.
3. *The Caxtons.* Blackwood.
4. *Novels by the Author of Pelham.* Saunders and Otley.

WHAT do we look for in fiction? What do we want in a novel? Of course, first of all we require to be amused. This has been long pronounced to be the one essential without which all others are valueless. As we only take up a novel for relaxation, if it fails to afford amusement we are justified in laying the book down. The most rigid stickler for rule will not feel it a duty to read a story through because he has begun it. Under this primary condition, then, we expect to have our feelings roused, our fancy kindled, our knowledge of life enlarged, our taste cultivated, our social conscience refined and quickened. To these requirements, even to the last, all must subscribe, for no one, in words, will allow himself willing to be amused at the expense of moral feeling—if any such there be, to him we do not address ourselves. These effects all meet in the fictions which have given us most pleasure in the reading, which live in our remembrance. If this be so, what an assemblage of rare gifts and faculties must combine to make the successful novelist! Thought at once intense and varied, an eye to embrace the range of nature and art, unwearying observation, an ever-watchful ready intelligence, a capacious memory, a keen wit, a universal sympathy, and the gift which can alone give to the rest expression and currency—the gift of language:—the large heart, the busy intellect, the eloquent pen. Every one who makes for himself a name in the world of imagination must be marked from his fellows by pre-eminence in these distinctions.

Let any one who demurs to this estimate, who regards a novel as a trifle to which he is superior, allowing himself to be absorbed in the best only with an apology and a protest, seriously consider the impression which a work of fiction has made upon himself, and the train of thought and imagery it has suggested, and then reflect how powerless is his own mind to raise such images, or to impress with any force his own ideas upon others. The same unwrought materials—the world of nature and of man—lie as open to him as to the

magician whose charm he despises. What structure can he raise out of them? What spell can he evoke? He may possess strong sense and sound judgment; but how little can he take in or reproduce of what actually passes before him, and which is seen, and felt, and understood by some rare spirits as the book in his hand proves! Let him consider how seldom he sees anything in the commerce of life to rouse, to excite, to interest; how flat he finds ordinary conversation; how dull ordinary society; how uninspiring even the intercourse of thought; how he disappoints himself when he wishes to amuse; how conscious he is of failure when he would seize a passing fancy, express a lively thought, or convey to another mind what fills his own. Perhaps—very probably indeed—he cannot passably relate an anecdote, or give a just notion of the character most familiar to him, nor can he devise a story for his little girl which she will listen to, or, indeed, which he can drag along for three minutes together, nor can he even express himself in a clear flow of grammatical English. This, at any rate, is the condition of a great many sensible, educated men. Let him, then, learn to own the genius of the man who can weave an elaborate plot, work this out by the impersonated shadows of his own raising, each standing forth in a distinctly-marked individuality; and bring them in contact with each other in the full shock and passion of flesh and blood reality: and let him at least confess that what he has felt it idleness to read has been the concentrated toil of a gifted mind to write, and let him respect the work which so few could imitate and far fewer rival. For ourselves, we hold a novel which owes its success to no adventitious aid, which is popular because it charms the fancy, warms the heart, or reveals nature in her true colours, as a triumph of literature, its author as one of the true aristocracy of intellect. A novel that does all this, or any of this, even in a minor degree, though obscured by many faults and shortcomings, is yet the work of no ordinary mind, and has cost the framer an effort of thought, a continuous study, a bending of all the faculties to a point, a generous labour, in fact, which would make us all indulgent to partial failure if we had sympathy or experience to realize it. Ought not our first impulse to be gratitude to the man who has done his best to entertain and cheer us, to turn our wearied thoughts into new channels, to open to us a brighter scene than our every-day existence supplies, and who has worked that our minds may rest?

Such thoughts present themselves naturally in connection with the popular novelist on whose prose works of fiction

we have undertaken to make some general remarks. No writer of this class has laboured more earnestly in his vocation than Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton; none has more fully recognised it as a sphere of personal duty demanding all his energy; no one has felt so constantly the necessity of labour and severe study to bring to fruition the conceptions of a lively fancy and a large and varied intelligence; none has abandoned himself with more self-devotion to the painful and irksome research which some of his subjects involved. Intellectually he must be regarded as one of our most conscientious writers: he has grudged no trouble, he has spared no pains, to bring his work up to his own ideal. And this not from necessity—the honest spur to many an indolent genius—but from love and reverence for his art, and probably from a more than commonly poignant yearning to win for himself a name—something that may last—a renown worthy to be called fame. We say ‘his own ideal’ as a qualification; for there is one important study which we cannot but feel that he has neglected—one that has never fairly engaged his attention; but whatever he has *aimed* at Sir E. B. Lytton has applied every effort to accomplish. For more than thirty years of a life, which without this application to the desk might yet be called a busy one, in which he has lived before men’s eyes in society, parliament, and office, he has been one of our leading, most prolific, most varied, and, if we estimate popularity by numbers of readers, most popular of our living novelists. This deserves to be called a career. The critics must allow so much: those critics with whom Sir Edward has had so many a bitter conflict; who have given and received so many hard blows in their attempt to set the world right in its estimate of his powers and successes.

Never, it must be owned, were critics and the republic of readers more at variance than in their judgment of this writer’s opening efforts. The critics protested, and the public read in spite of the critics,—read then and read still, to judge by the statistics of circulating libraries, and mechanics’ institutes, and foreign ‘translations, and railway reprints. Not, of course, that the critics were without influence: but the main body of admirers were not readers of criticism, and cared very little for its dictum if they were amused, which the author took care that they should be. If they were indifferent, however, the author was not. Never was there a more sensitive and irritable nature, one sooner lashed into fury, and more ready to hurl defiance, to lavish all an assaulted author’s armoury of retort, scorn, and hate on his maligners. For his was one of those temperaments so common amongst the eager, high-wrought, praise-craving race of

authors who cannot believe in honest censure applied to themselves; he was one to whom disparagement of his better self, *his works*, was libel, slander, assassination, a moral obliquity, a base malignity, which can proceed only from a sordid and blackened heart. And it must be owned that the criticism in vogue some twenty-five or thirty years ago was not calculated to propitiate its object: there was no attempt to smooth and soften matters where blame had to be administered, no notion of the victim's benefit, no appearance of pain or regret in inflicting the inevitable wound. It was an enemy's thrust, not the surgeon's probe. No one thought of the author's feelings, except to scarify them. So, at least, it always struck us when Professor Wilson or Wilson Croker felt it their duty to show up a Whig author, a poet of the new school, or a Cockney journalist. The offender must be put down. Contempt, recoil, defiance, were the prominent sentiments. It was a declaration of war to the knife.

The criticism under which our author winced was met with equal arms, and the tactics of defence and assault were the same. Young and susceptible, he had no notions of dignity to interfere with his natural taste for the genial game of reprisals. If Fraser parodied, caricatured, and exposed his new code of morals, he railed at his 'enemies' in his prefaces, and impaled them in his novels, reckless of the story's more legitimate interests. Take, for instance, the grand tragic climax in 'Paul Clifford,' wrought up with considerable effect, in which just as the judge and the criminal are brought face to face, and the father condemns the son to death, the editor of the 'Asinæum' is dragged in to destroy the illusion, and to remind us of the author's wrongs, when we should be on tenterhooks to hear whether the hero is hanged or not. To add spirit to the quarrel, author and reviewer wrote songs on one another, in which he was winner who called the other 'ass' the oftenest, and with most ingenious reiteration. We read these things now, and feel that an age has passed by. The war of opinion on matters of taste, the battle of right and wrong in morals, are fought with different weapons. Civilisation has made a great stride, though whether the more civil critic of our day has succeeded in making his art any more really palatable to the objects of it, admits of a doubt.

But these are past events, of which most of our readers would know but little except for the republication of certain papers in Mr. Thackeray's *Miscellanies*. Our author has made himself a new reputation in certain classes by his recent serials, 'The Caxtons,' 'My Novel,' and his latest work, drawn to a close as we write. It is on these that the present age of readers forms its estimate of his powers, though probably not without some

acquaintance, more or less distinct, with his previous works. Now novel readers—not at present to talk of critics—are of two classes: those who willingly give themselves up to an author's guidance, and accept his views of life without demur or hesitation, not the less delighted with the new world, for the very reason that it differs from the dull one with which they are familiar; and those who are haunted by a craving for the probable, who are visited, in spite of themselves, with obstinate questionings; who require that an author should wake an echo in their own consciousness, and cannot acquiesce in an order of things where the scenes, motives, actions, and phraseology are all opposed to their experience. We confess that we rather lean to this latter class, and, as such, we cannot but regard our author's latest picture of life and manners, 'What will he do with it?' as a mine of wondering speculation, a pregnant fact of some kind, if we can but get at the clue to it. For ourselves, we cannot imagine a writer setting about the delineation of men and women without the desire to make them act according to the nature of men and women; and here is an author who by native powers, training, and experience ought to be peculiarly qualified to excel in such delineation. Yet we apprehend that no one will assert that Guy Darrell, Waife, or Mrs. Crane, represent any phase of thought, feeling, instinct, or habit they ever met with or heard of. Now this is the difficulty. Sir E. B. Lytton's readers are without his gifts: they cannot write with the fancy, the tact, the knowledge, the facility that prompt his pen. How comes it that they have instincts that fail him? How comes it that we all know what he is ignorant of? or, if not ignorant, why is he indifferent to the truth or falsehood of his representations? Why, after thirty years' study of his art, is his imagination peopled with such parodies of humanity? why does he delight to expatiate in absurdities? how has his ideal come to be so at odds with reason and nature? These reflections naturally turn our thoughts to our author's whole literary career in seeking for a cause. Habit is second nature. What habits has his long course of labour formed, inducing this partial blindness?—creating another world so out of harmony with this real one? The inquiry necessarily throws us back on his earlier efforts, and to a general review of his works.

Perhaps in all cases a first novel, written *con amore*, will reveal in fair measure an author's resources. The future may develop them, but the first effort of fancy contains the germ and embryo of maturity: all the more potent and influential agencies which impressed him in the most impressible periods of childhood and youth will be recognised there. In the department of invention

there will be found what afterwards assume so many Protean shapes—certain characters, primary ideas and effects, scenes, situations, picturesque conjunctions, favourite contrasts and allusions; certain ideas of influence, attraction, and electric sympathies; certain tastes in beauty, certain subtle links connecting seeming opposites in morals and ethics. The bias of temperament will in like manner show itself, influencing the judgment, infusing prejudice, deciding the view taken of facts and opinions from volume to volume through the whole of a literary life. Of course an author improves or degenerates; but the leaning of the mind, the aspect in which it regards what comes before it, will remain the same. The virtues, the sins, the humours, the particular aspect of humanity which have engaged the mind's earliest curiosity and speculation, will retain their hold to the last. This mould, gradually formed by the process of thought and observation, is fixed for once and all by the effort of composition, which stamps its impress on the author's mind—supposing it a mind of vigour and power—as indelibly as on the printed page which conveys its workings to the world.

In 'Pelham,' then, we think we detect the main springs and characteristics of our author's turn of invention and method of thought. It gives an insight into his temperament, his most prominent influences, sympathies, and antipathies. We recognise in this precocious performance the plastic lively intellect working with that complacency and enjoyment so evident in Sir E. B. Lytton's style, and which ease and versatility must always give their possessor. Such minds as his are constitutionally vain—we would use the word in this writer's own sense, as a quality in itself indifferent; good, or bad, according to the action to which it stimulates. For there is no gift which so elates its owner as facility; no power which, in competition with others, brings a man off so constantly triumphant, and which, therefore, appeals so naturally, and with such certainty of success, to opinion, and hence learns to choose general opinion as its test and arbiter. The slow and sure thinker so often finds himself left behind, that he is forced to rest on some other basis than the popular voice, to seek some other reward than praise; but the qualities that most easily win praise will learn to court it, to find it a motive and chief good. And to this we trace the uniform appeal to the opinion of society and its current maxims which amuses us in the boy-author, and which pervades the whole series; to this we refer his complacent assumption of intimacy with its most refined and select circles, and mastery of its principles. Those who pride themselves on their knowledge of the world will always be governed by it; and certainly the moral of

these tales, from first to last, is to like what the world likes, to excuse what the world excuses, to pursue that course of conduct which wins most of the world's regard and estimation.

A mind formed to shine, and thrown early into society, technically so called, can hardly escape subservience to its laws: and if, in this first intoxication, it embodies its fresh impressions in a picture of life, and gives them definiteness, the allegiance is materially strengthened. The youthful novelist, proud of his experience, chooses to invest his hero of twenty with a preternatural knowledge of the world, and a complete mastery of all its secrets and roads to success. Pelham is more than a match for the oldest hands; his every action is the result of the most mature deliberation; he decides to be a coxcomb on principle, because he thinks it tells, and even conducts his immoralities on the same unimpassioned system. But while we laugh at these prematurely *blasé* airs, we still recognise great acuteness and ability in the delineation; and what constitutes the point of 'Pelham' will, we think, still be regarded as the author's especial forte and success—his picture of society, *i. e.*, artificial and conventional life. There he still shows himself most at home. But his *ambition* has a higher object: from the first he set himself to depict the tragic and the pathetic; and some portion of every novel is devoted to the 'Ideal'—to 'Pity,' to 'Terror,' to 'Passion,' and a great many other disturbing and alarming qualities, into which he throws his mind with an almost convulsive energy and strain after effect: and not wholly without success, but we think always in subservience to the more really potent though less elevated influence; for in every work we have seen—verse or prose—of Sir E. B. Lytton's, he shows himself so essentially a man of his own time, so subject to the laws actually at work amongst us, that these more familiar, less heroic agencies will perpetually step in to disturb our faith, and recall us to the common routine, the vernacular of every-day life.

In 'Pelham' is developed that love of paradox for which its author sacrificed so much; there we find the sentiment, expanded afterwards into story.

'A man may commit the greatest of crimes, and (if no other succeed to it) it may change not the current of his being; and to all the world—to all intents—for all objects he may be the same; he may equally serve his country, equally benefit his friends—be generous, brave, benevolent, all that he was before. One crime, however heinous, makes no revolution in the system.'—'Pelham,' vol. iii. p. 19.

And here that favourite view, that outward seeming is no test of the real condition of the heart, which enables the novelist to turn to such generous uses the ordinary type of selfishness,

the accomplished man of the world. The discerning student of character is represented as thus reading Pelham's mind:—

‘While you seem frivolous, you have a mind capable of the most solid and important affairs; you appear effeminate, none are more daring; indolent, none are more actively ambitious; utterly selfish, and I know that no earthly interest could bribe you into meanness and injustice.’

A string of contradictions is this picture, which, however unfamiliar to our own experience, except in what is recognised as the character of Lord Melbourne, must, if existing anywhere, open out a fine field for the subtle observation and startling contrasts so congenial to the writer of fiction. In ‘Pelham,’ too, we are introduced to that outlawed race of vagabonds, thieves, and desperadoes, who contrived to win themselves a place in our author's earliest affections, from which thirty years have not dislodged them. In ‘Pelham,’ even, we are not without some hint and touch of that more serious vein which in later years has so largely and creditably added to the number of Sir Edward Lytton's readers. We find the hero, for instance, putting up an extempore prayer, with unction and evident relish for the exercise; though under circumstances which would have embarrassed most people.

Perhaps this all means that from the first our author has viewed everything, every sentiment, passion, and propensity, of our nature, not so much for what it is in itself, but in relation to his art. The artistic bearing precedes the moral one in his estimation. This devotion to his calling as an art we believe to be the secret of his excellence, so far as he has reached it: it is the reason, also, that his excellence has never reached higher. So at least it has been his aim and principle to view things; but there has been always one impediment to carrying out the principle dispassionately—a perpetual self-consciousness, which leads the author never to forget himself or to wish the reader to forget him in the interest of the story. Art itself and all its wiles must give way when the author has to indulge some personal feeling or antipathy. As time imparts courage this fact comes out boldly as a claim and a right. The author *ought* to show himself to the reader; ‘authors are not generally egotistical enough:’ he therefore intersperses his scenes with colloquies in his own person: he would avowedly rather engage the reader's interest and curiosity for himself than his story. In his later works the same indulgence is claimed in a more artful and subtle fashion: the author contemplates, dilates on, worships his own creations under the guise of an impartial bystander. He assures the reader it is impossible to convey an idea of the majesty, the grace, the tenderness of the creatures of his imagination. There is something

pathetic in this doting love for the offspring of his fancy; we cannot for pity and shame wound a parent's sensibility by a different and colder estimate.

We always accept with reservation the accounts which poets and novelists give us of their course of thought in the production of their works: they delight to systematise, to review themselves as a great whole, and to see a progressive design in every separate effort. 'Paul Clifford,' the moral of which, our readers may remember, is that all rogues are honest men, and all honest men are rogues, and in which art and consistency are amusingly sacrificed to the author's rage and vengeance on the reviewers, is in his subsequent survey regarded by the author as a 'cry to society,' as a young poet's view of crime under the light of the philosophy of circumstance, and thus leading by a natural law to the deeper and maturer treatment of the same subject in 'Eugene Aram,' his mind gaining force and insight by continued severe application to one theme. But we do not recognise any other connection than the fascination which crime, or perhaps the mysteries that gather round crime, have always exercised over this writer, to whom the morbid, the exceptional, and the mysterious have always been the more influential stimulants. Circumstances made Sir E. B. Lytton familiar while a boy with the history of Eugene Aram, who had actually taught in the family of his grandfather. We do not doubt that the tale of this criminal's conviction would deeply impress his youthful fancy, and perhaps suggest some of the moral difficulties to which his novel gives expression; but he took it up because it was a strange story that suited his fancy, and out of which he hoped to weave 'pity and terror.' He looks back upon it still as a favourite effort of rising genius, remembering, no doubt, the vividness of early impressions. Our readers must bear in mind that our author never apologises for anything or gives up anything that he has ever written: it was all necessary to the formation of his career, it is part of himself.

'If none of my prose works have been so attacked as "Eugene Aram," none have so completely triumphed over attack. It is true that, whether from real or affected ignorance of the true morality of fiction, a few critics may still reiterate the old commonplace charges of "selecting heroes from Newgate," or "investing murderers with interest;" but the firm hold which the work has established in the opinion of the general public, and the favour it has received in every country where English literature is known, suffice to prove that, whatever its faults, it belongs to that legitimate class of fiction which illustrates life and truth, and only deals with crime as the recognised agency of pity and terror, and in the conduct of tragic narrative. . . . In point of composition, "Eugene Aram" is, I think, entitled to rank amongst the best of my fictions. It somewhat humiliates me to acknowledge that neither practice nor study has enabled

me to surpass a work, written at a very early age, in the skilful construction and patient development of plot ; and though I have since sought to call forth higher and more subtle passions, I doubt if I have ever excited the two elementary passions of tragedy, viz., pity and terror, to the same degree.'—*Preface to the Edition of 1851.*

The real question at issue between Sir Edward B. Lytton and his critics has always been about nature and truth. He has uniformly disregarded what he designates a 'servile imitation of nature,' as fit only 'for journeymen and tyros ;' he appeals to high art against the 'commonplace, falsely called the natural.' He will not submit to be bound by other men's notions of the probable or the possible : we believe that he seldom very heartily consults his own opinions on these points ; he quotes the sayings of painters, 'that nature is not to be copied, but exalted :' 'that the loftiest order of art, selecting only the loftiest combinations, is the perpetual struggle of humanity to approach the gods :' that highest beauty is the creature of the idea in the artist's mind : that this idea is not inborn but it has come from an intense study : that the great painter, as the great author, embodies what is *possible* to man, but what is not common to mankind ; and he defends himself by such authorities as Reynolds and Raphael. Now if Reynolds's and Raphael's works may be taken as the illustration or interpretation of their words, the critics accept their dictum ; they complain of no want of nature either in Raphael's ideal creations, though they recognise it as no common nature, or in Reynolds's refined but real humanity. They have no objection to an author in like manner idealising and refining, if, like these painters, he keeps nature for his model, never outrages nature, or shocks our ideas of it. For whatever ideal a painter or an author has in his own mind should appeal to, and *must* be subject, in a certain sense, to an ideal in the reader's or spectator's mind ; and when critics demand truth, it is that their own ideal shall not be offended ; they do not demand merely the commonplace, they do not object to art ; but they demand that art and the ideal should be applied in the direction of ordinary humanity, not in opposition to it. For they hold that the merely natural and the heroic do not take opposite directions ; but that the one transcends the other. For ourselves, we believe that it is the highest work of the imagination to arrive, unaided by experience, at real literal truth ; and any language that disparages the nature we see as not worth portraying, awakes our mistrust of its author's power, or even *wish*, to set it exactly before us in new and exceptional circumstances.

And, in fact, there is always something that our author deliberately prefers to truth. This, which he would call the Ideal—evidence of a vivid imagination—we pronounce *effect* ; some-

thing to startle and astonish, to strike us by its contrasts, and win our admiration by its novelty. Now in 'Eugene Aram' he first threw himself without constraint into this vein, and wilfully abandoned the 'commonplace;' we do not, therefore, wonder that he should regard the effort with affection, the deeper and more lasting for the storm of moral indignation which it raised. For while he was thinking only of art, and was fascinated by this ideal of a great and magnanimous soul, good and benignant in spite of its solitary crime, or rather elevated by it out of ordinary humanity; while he was occupied by the strong contrasts and new sensations 'of pity and terror' which he was calling into being; his sensible readers were aghast at the paradox, and vehement in their condemnation of the outraged morality. We need not enter into the moral question of investing a cold-blooded murderer with interest: it is on the ground of truth violated that we take our stand. The choice of subject implied a tendency to extravagance; its mode of treatment we believe to have permanently lowered the author's feeling for nature; for the habit of viewing things, not in their plain bearing, but in some artificial light and forced combination—call it what fine names you will—once indulged, is likely to spread and gain a very formidable mastery. Such a mastery, we think, sentimentalism has gained over our author ever since its inevitable reign in this his favourite work.

Sentimentalism is a word invented to define a loose, unreasoning, weak condition of feeling, dwelling, not in heart or brain, but in the debatable land of nerves, fancies, tastes, propensities, and vanity; amenable by turn to all these impulses, and without settled basis in reason, morals, or fact. What we designate as sentiment or feeling is always supposed to be founded on some inner conviction which secures consistency: in matters of morals this is conscience; in questions of taste it is nature: it proceeds from the heart, and is connected with the inner truths of our being. It is not awakened by outside show of any kind, as such, or, if it is, it is through want of perception, and when the fallacy is detected the sentiment is quenched—that is, feelings are genuine things and can deal only with genuine things. But the field and region of sentimentalism is show and seeming, which it accepts for reality: sentimentalism does not discern between the shadow and the substance: it is indifferent and dead to the infinite distance that lies between virtues and the show of virtues, appearances, and realities, the *signs* of high qualities and their essence. Wherever there is a fair show, high pretension, assumption of any sort, there sentimentalism gives in its allegiance, gets up its little fer-

vours, expends its wordy enthusiasm, falls into its raptures. In weak minds, from want of acuteness, genuine respectable feeling often assumes the flimsy disguise; but where it annoys, oppresses, and sickens a right judgment, it is when the true appeal of all feeling is *wilfully* disregarded; where the mind which indulges in the spurious state of emotion chooses to be blind; where it prefers to follow a mawkish or exaggerated inclination, when conscience should be the real arbiter; or where it turns its back on the light of reason to indulge a false notion of grace and beauty; where it likes to have the senses tickled by seeming grandeur of action or delicacy and fastidiousness of conduct, while it refuses to search for what alone gives true grandeur to either conduct or action, or to acknowledge that they are beautiful or hideous in the true sense, only according to the motives that influence them. The sentimentalist does not see this: a bold front, a high daring, lively passions, an eloquent tongue, are with him positively good things, real virtues, awakening and deserving enthusiastic admiration in the looker-on in whatever cause they are exhibited. So long as appearances are kept up and a grand show made, his feelings know no difference between the hero defying calumny, and the criminal repelling a just accusation, and lying away his soul with audacity and nerve: both are examples of a noble courage;—between the man who is great under adverse circumstances, because he feels the eye of God on him above the cloud and storm of human prejudices and malignity, and who is bold as speaking His truth, and the guilty wretch who acts out his part without flinching because the eye of *man* is upon him; to the world's opinion being his only appeal, this being his one motive, his one dread in his last shift as it has been in his long career. We mean that the sentimentalist acts as if so influenced: the words he uses are the same in both cases; high-sounding words expressing his own sympathy, and seeking to excite it in others, because it *looks* well to face it out to the last and to simulate innocence; whereas there is surely nothing *great* left for the guilty to do, but to confess his guilt, to be struck down and humbled; because in the one case he is actuated by the truth, in the other by a lie, a miserable, shortsighted, and fatal delusion. No instance can better express what we mean than the following description of the murderer receiving sentence, nor illustrate more forcibly the counterfeit, slippery condition of feeling to which the delineation of such a character must reduce its author:—

‘Aram received his sentence in profound composure. Before he left the bar, he drew himself up to his full height and looked slowly round the court, with that thrilling and almost sublime unmovedness of aspect

which belonged to him alone of all men; and which was rendered yet more impressive by a smile—slight but eloquent beyond all words—of a soul collected in itself: no forced convulsive effort vainly masking the terror or the pang; no mockery of self that would mimic contempt for others; but more in majesty than pity; rather as daring fate than defying the judgment of others; rather as if wrapped himself in the independence of a quiet, than the disdain of a proud heart.'—'Eugene Aram,' p. 277.

We have so far discussed sentimentalism in its moral aspect, in its relation to strict conscientious truth: it has a more congenial and constant reign in the same order of mind over the taste. We are all familiar with its influence over manner, that evident pursuit after an 'ideal,' which we recognise in some of our acquaintance; that perpetual striving after what is supposed to be the highest form of emotion, instead of obeying the spontaneous dictates of the heart; that abandonment to mere appearances, and consequent loss of discernment and sympathy, which raises so chill a barrier between the actor—who after all is not exactly insincere—and the object of the ingenious display.

In many works of fiction the characters are all sentimental together,—each saying the finest thing that the case could bear, instead of the real words and tone it would elicit,—because the writer has not knowledge enough to delineate truth: but in the instance of our author we must say that the choice from the first was in a manner deliberate. With his powers, with his discernment of character, wherever he has really studied it he could certainly have made his scenes more probable, he could have made his characters talk more like men and women, if he had desired to do so. But to his restless ambitious fancy, truth—truth in detail—truth obscure, without the capital T—must have always seemed at once a tame and an unmanageable thing. He could not even admire unadorned Nature; he must give her cheek a dash of rouge. Probably he began his career too soon, and pursued it too unremittingly, and with too much success, for there ever to be leisure for the severest of all studies; and we can well imagine that, in the first ardour of invention, the lingering, watching, and waiting for exact fidelity of representation would seem a labour not worth the trouble. His whole style was not fitted for it: when it came ready to his hand he had no place for it. A stormy scene or a tender scene, with plenty of action after the approved model, seemed more original, and to fit in better, as being more in harmony with both characters and situation; and indeed our conclusion has been, after a general perusal of this striking series of fiction, not that no author could do so well without truth as Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton, but that he cannot do with it. How

intolerable to him, we feel, would be the impertinent question at every pause of the pen, 'But could this be? is it thus that men and women act? is this the life of our own experience?' We are sure that the great majority of his pages have been written either without the question once rising, or in deliberate defiance of it, the author feeling that he is giving us something better; and there has always been the proud appeal to the number of his readers to back up the comfortable persuasion. For as long as there are action, scenes, and situations (very good things in a novel), with due infusion of bluster and sentiment, there are always readers enough who trouble themselves little about the truth of delineation. But if, instead of railing at the critics, our author had set himself to reflect,—if, checking the speed of composition, he had measured himself by the standard of nature before the *habits* of composition were formed, he might not only have been read, but have led his readers to good purpose: as it is, we will venture to say that no author so much read has had so little influence. With what deference we take up an author who is faithful to nature, who will, as it were, see and hear for himself what he writes down; who waits and watches for the inspiration; who will not put pen to paper without its sanction! What are pages of eloquence to the subtler delight we experience in being able to follow the simplest sentence from one heart to another, and being thus admitted to the real conflict of human passion or emotion? But we must leave this point for the present, though only to return to it in another form, for on this question, in its various aspects, hangs all that criticism has to say on the subject before us.

'Night and Morning,' which followed 'Eugene Aram,' we consider an excellent example of the author's early style and powers. It is unquestionably an excellent novel in its own department of the art—the melodramatic. We do not, it is true, find ourselves amongst people or incidents that ever came within our observation, or happened to ourselves. Everything is conventional, but all blends together; daylight is never let in to disturb the harmonious glare, and to betray its artificial colouring. The plot is carried on to its climax swimmingly: we acquire confidence in the author that he will shrink from nothing; that his promises of excitement will all be fulfilled. A virtual compact is established between him and his reader: if the one will, for the time being, accept his ideas of character and concatenation of events, he will reward him, for the concession of his judgment, by a great many pretty pictures, entertaining situations, and startling extrications; and also a great deal of very clever observation on life, told in an easy, polished, attractive style.

The compact is well kept on either side : though we own the line is *almost* passed when we have to accept a real veritable *idiot* as our ideal of perfect womanhood, and to sympathise with the hero's good fortune in securing this treasure for a wife—a permanent helpmate. We do not exaggerate ; the epithet is the author's own, which we are never allowed to forget ; and as this is one of his works, written with most ease and flow, with fullest use of his peculiar powers of mind and fancy, we must accept the picture as his ideal of womanhood, perhaps somewhat strongly drawn, but all the more forcibly embodying the simple idea that woman should be all heart and no head. Having in his previous stories shown us women possessed of average brains ; but ruled only by sentiment and instinct—as where Lucy marries the convicted highwayman and escaped convict, and Madelaine gives her whole soul to the murderer, without heeding much whether he were guilty or not—he now ventures to give the clue to these anomalies by boldly asserting by example that the ideal female has no reason, and is better without it ; that she is prettier, more interesting, better conducted, secures a better match, and makes a more devoted wife. Fanny has no reason, no principles, no judgment, and conducts herself, or rather is conducted through the piece very well without them, by the simple instincts of the heart, which guide her through the most refined niceties of morals and manners. And this poor innocent, the object of curiosity to the vulgar, of protection to policemen, of pity to the tender-hearted, of evil designs to the wicked, who wanders through the streets singing snatches of disconnected songs, who cannot read till her heart teaches her, who cannot distinguish between death and absence, who arrives pretty nearly at the last stage before she knows what a wedding is, and then can only learn from the lips of the hero,—“ I have heard of a wedding very often,” says Fanny, with a pretty look of puzzlement and doubt, “ but I don't know exactly what it means,”—settles down at last for life with Philip, and has 20,000*l.* a year ; and the only apology the author makes for the gentleman is, that he should ever have tried to get another lady to fill the situation.

But even here there is a fitness : the hero is not every woman's money, nor is he a commonplace specimen of manhood. Always blessing or cursing with a high hand ; consorting now with rogues and ruffians, and now the chosen associate of dukes ; sometimes knocking you down ; sometimes kneeling at your feet ; sometimes piercing you through with those fierce fiery eyes, that shine in the dark ; sometimes falling on your neck, and claspings you in those strenuous arms ; but always indulging in the loftiest declamation, and gratifying the moral sense by utterances of

the sublimest virtue; and withal engaged in such a stir of incident, change, and adventure, that we do not at all wonder the story should engage one generation of youth after another till the popular volume bears evidence to all the senses of its long career of success. The moral harps on the old story—the one problem which seems to have seized and vexed the soul of the author's boyhood, the distinction between vice and crime. Vice is most ably represented by a certain Lord Lilburne, and an uncommonly clever delineation he is, so smooth, so easy, so thoroughgoing, so gentlemanlike. In mere men of the world the author is always at home, and to a degree truthful; and if villains do ever quite candidly talk of their villanies and the motives of them, as we must perhaps allow them to do in romance, they could not do it with less outrage to our sense of propriety and probability than does this accomplished nobleman. There is a scene between this man and his respectable brother-in-law, who is threatened with the loss of his fortune and estate by the discovery of a will, which is really a masterpiece of skill in the drawing of the two intellects and degrees of wickedness.

But it strikes us that in none of his works do we find the author more at home, more in the conscious enjoyment of his powers, more prominent in his own person, more fearless to express his sentiments on all subjects, more confident of his readers' sympathy, than in the six volumes of consecutive story, 'Ernest Maltravers' and 'Alice.' Here his earliest and later manners meet—the fancy and daring of youth joined to, but not restrained by, the philosophical musing of later life, and over all the fine harmonising gloss of sentiment in its sleekest shine and polish. "Virtue, my dear Lady Blarney, virtue is worth any price; but where is it to be found?" There is a great deal of it, we may reply, in these volumes, diffused over an infinite amount of moral reflection and polite conversation—only through it all there is a general slipperiness and negligence of precise rule—an assumption that Destiny rules a young man's (especially a rich young man's) career for a certain number of dissipated years; that in our faults lies the germ of virtues; that wisdom and experience must be wrought from the philosophy of the passions; and so on. These principles, and the very basis of the plot, having raised some question from the critics of the first three volumes, he attributes their demur to political hostility and literary envy, and, while continuing his story in the same strain in which it was begun, hardly condescends replies to the *few* who have questioned his moral. We believe that further experience has led our author to question it himself, so far, at least, as to abstain from a repetition of the same sentiments; but

we still believe that the work is a favourite with its author, as being congenial to his powers. One feature, the continual intrusion of self in extravagantly lengthy comments and rhapsodical reflections, whether a literary mistake or not, we consider fortunate; for as the writer wishes to win for his story that credit which he gives to his heroine, 'an innocence that sin itself could not mar,' the attraction of so novel an idea of innocence might have been stronger without this formidable infusion of prose.

As it is, the youthful and impressible reader only gathers that a clever man very much in the world puts forth views which certainly subvert what he has been taught by sterner moralists, and that he opens an easier road to virtue. The student of Sir E. B. Lytton finds it often implied, in very graceful and plausible language, that virtue and vice are not quite the distinct positive things he had fancied them to be, but mixed up a good deal with temperament, circumstance, vulgarity, and refinement. He may be led to prefer feeling to principle, to associate the notion of hypocrisy with a respectable exterior, and to look out, as an ingenious exercise of his reason, for something good in every character where the outer show of virtue is laid aside; but he is *not* led to sympathise in the intenser, more dangerous sense, with vice in action; nor do we say that the author desires that he should be so familiarised with vice, while thus engaged in his philosophic inquiries, and amusing himself by analysing, till he almost explains away, the vices and follies of mankind. If these perilous speculations had been assisted by vigorous scenes, showing them in their actual working; if the same paradoxes had been forcibly exhibited in the real contact and strife of mind with mind, and our sympathies had been aroused on the side of error, vividly impersonated, acting, contending, suffering; if, by the subtle skill of plot and dialogue, we had been ensnared into the momentary admission that in the like dilemma we should have been so tempted and so yielded, this story must have been classed amongst mischievous and dangerous fiction. As it is, in more than one instance the author invents a predicament, of which, in his own person as a looker on, he asserts that, in falling into positive sin, his hero only does what every one else would have done in the same circumstances.

While in these moods, then, we cannot but hold it to be fortunate that some either natural or acquired disability should have withheld from our clever author the novelist's crowning gift—the delineation of the passions and deeper emotions of human nature in action and by example. He believes himself to possess it, as we may judge from many a complacent preface; but we are never

more struck with his falling short in this essential point than in these flowery volumes, where, artistically speaking, it is most needed. Probably his very facility has uniformly stood in his way. We cannot but suspect that whenever dialogue is hit off with a running pen, unless where deliberate thought has preceded it, one of two consequences must follow:—either the talk is commonplace, what real distinct persons might say, but what no wise person would write down,—the composer's attention being fixed on the characteristics of his personages, to the disregard of the intrinsic quality and value of their words—or, the author, intent on making each sentence embody a thought or a feeling, forgets the puppets he has set moving, and speaks in his own person. Now Sir E. B. Lytton does really eschew the mere inanities of conversation, the pointless flow of talk, meagre in itself and useless in furthering the progress of the story: in the easy graceful intercourse of polished society he is often eminently successful, as well as in the dialogue of his mere men of the world, who in real life are conventional, both in their views and modes of expression; his conversation tells something, conveys experience and observation, or tends to a point; but then, where nature and character demand the greatest play and variety of thought and expression, he constantly abandons himself to the other alternative, till every character is the author, every person in the piece uses his language, embodies his experience, illustrates his views. It is the writer in every imaginable mood pitched against himself. Were he a villain at all, such a villain would he be. Man, woman, and child own one common parentage: the current of thought, the procession of ideas is the author's. It takes a long time for a man to divest himself of self—to put himself in another's attitude of mind, but without this it is impossible to delineate a life-like, animated scene, sharp, antagonistic, hitting home; or really *touching* the tenderer emotions: the mood of each interlocutor varying, influenced, *changed* by the collision. Here, in the most graphic scenes, the author does not get beyond his actors saying, when the time comes, what they would have prepared in contemplation of the occasion; while in every actual meeting of two minds anticipations are reversed, previous design is upset, preconcerted eloquence paralysed, people find themselves in positions they could not foresee, and are influenced by actual contact in a way almost unintelligible to themselves.

It is, perhaps, owing to this unconscious estimate of each character as only a different phase of the author's mind that we are so little moved by their fate; or is it only our cold-blooded years that make us so easy whether the charming women of his fancy

live or die? We think not: Lady Florence dies, but the tongue by which she spoke, the hand which held her eloquent pen, still lives: in like manner after her successor in the hero's affections, a girl of sixteen, has neatly hit off the characteristics of Alfieri's style, with all the author's point of expression, she, too, slides off from our recognition as a positive being, just as she did ten years before, when, as a little child, she thus expresses herself on the contrast and antagonism of life and death:—"Oh, come up, come up, cousin Lumley, he cannot, cannot die in your presence, you always seem so *full of life*;"—a train of reasoning characteristic of the author, but incompatible with the condition of childhood. He is fond of introducing little girls into his stories: their innocence and guilelessness form a pleasing contrast with the practised worldliness and dark machinations which go on around them. They are generally, to enhance the effect, set up by themselves, without kith or kin, and always in the most improbable relation to those with whom they are allied. Under these rare circumstances they conduct themselves with a sort of angelical decorum and good sense, and whenever they open their mouths introduce us to a minute edition of the author's more sentimental self. They act Chorus. Our readers may be able to recall the Helen of 'My Novel,' the Blanche of 'The Caxtons,' the enchantingly artless little actress of 'What will he do with it?' and others—all miracles of grace, sentiment, and prudence, but never conveying a single idea in harmony with our own experience of childhood.

Perhaps the recurrence in these two stories of a second heroine, gifted (we use the word advisedly) with a partial imbecility, furnishes the right occasion for a few general remarks on our author's women, a point on which he evidently feels impregnable. No author piques himself on a more enlarged acquaintance with the sex: he would yield to no one in chivalrous devotion to woman's merits, her charms, and influence. But the tone strikes us as a little out of keeping with the times, as failing in that deference to which the women of our day are used. Indeed, the very assumption of this complete insight implies a something too much *de haut en bas*. Women, who have their own credit for penetration, don't care to be seen through in this easy fashion, nor will such of them as are accustomed to be listened to, and replied to as equals, feel their vanity much stimulated by such honied phrases as 'the charming babble of women,' by which our author designates their graceful diction and lively sense. In fact, his conception of female excellence tastes a little of the old school. He probably designed to justify and account

for his predilection, by the saying, in 'My Novel,' 'that poets need repose when they love;' a condition, as it would seem, incompatible with any equality of intellectual intercourse. But the august band of female novelists has changed all this, and set up counter ideals from the old, soft, submissive, gentle type—women who can stand alone, reason, lead, instruct, command; female characters wrought out with such power that they take hold on men's minds. Not that our author denies intellect to women, but he regards it as a misfortune: he cannot see how they are to make a good use of it. It brings them into scrapes, and does mischief to all concerned. As to *fame*, he does not allow even his most daring feminine spirits to dream of it through other means than by the indirect channels of a lover, a husband, or a son; and this modified aspiration, this humble ambition, leads them to deny their nature and renounce their more legitimate desires, if not to graver errors and positive crimes. In a scene where women are so essential as in a novel, it is necessary to invest some of them with intelligence; it is too great a demand on a writer's genius to have to invent varieties of incapacity and fatuity; and, besides, the business of the piece could not be carried on. The clever women, then, do to flirt with, to lead the hero through the necessary vicissitudes of feeling, to rack his sensibilities, and teach him experience; but our author never lets any one he cares for marry a woman of superior intellect: he would not do him such an ill turn. He settles him down after the turmoil of passion with some gentle creature, who does not, it is true, understand one word in ten that he utters, but who looks up to him all the more with docile, undoubting worship. Where his fancy allows itself free range, we see the notion indulged (as in the case of Fanny and Alice) to its extreme: even this limited intelligence is derived second-hand through the affections, and he does not shrink from the comparison with the inferior animals, the view inevitably suggested. We apologise to our fair readers for pointing out the painful fact that twice Sir E. B. Lytton likens his favourite heroine to a *dog*.

'She understood little or nothing till she had found an inspirer in that affection which inspires both beast and man, which makes the dog (in his natural state one of the meanest of the savage race) a companion, a guardian, a protector, and raises instinct half way to the height of reason.'—'Ernest Maltravers,' vol. ii. p. 93.

And to do the author's consistency justice, this idea is very well carried out: through six volumes Alice never says an intelligent thing; and how the hapless lover is to pass the rest of his life with her would fill us with dismay, if he had excited in us any warm regard or esteem for the lady in the course of our acquaintance.

Even the virtue of constancy—so indispensable to the morality of fiction—suffers in its dignity by this view of feminine nature: it is a sort of unreasoning fidelity, by which *men* are not equally bound; and the most excusable failures are visited on the fair delinquents, with a sort of *lash* of indignation from the stronger natures whom they have wronged, which reminds us too much of the master's treatment of his straying hound. Some of our readers may have fresh in their memory the outrageous scene between the sublime Guy Darrell and the abject Marchioness, which would be revolting if the outrage were not really against reason and common sense rather than feeling. There is throughout an understanding that woman's being is to be merged into her lover's without any reciprocal fusion; while she is made softly to murmur, 'Ever since we have loved one another my existence has been but a shadow of thine.' However, this mesmeristic abandonment of self-government and responsibility is too much in accordance with precedent for us to dwell on, but that we believe it is the tendency of modern romance to extend, rather than to diminish the female franchise on all hands.

Nothing strikes us more in the popular fiction of the day than the slight tenure by which persons are made to hold their place,—their particular standing in the world. In the state of things we live in men at least have a *station* of their own, the very meaning of the word suggesting an idea of permanence, a position which secures a certain stability. Every person in the world bears a positive relation, and owes distinct duties to himself as well as to others. Whatever changes come, however he is affected by them, still he is himself, and more to himself than any one can be to him; but this fact is uniformly distasteful to the imagination, which likes to believe in an utter susceptibility to impressions, even to the loss of identity. To take our present author as an example: his notion of the heroic in feeling is an entire self-sacrifice to every strong emotion, a capacity of absolute merging heart, conscience, and action into another's being, so as to be ruled and influenced solely from without. Love, of course, is the more frequent motive to this morbid condition, and real life is not without instances of existences darkened, careers stopped, and gloomy seclusion—death in life,—chosen by some weak victim of passion 'crossed in love;' but we have no doubt that whenever this morbid and sullen self-abandonment is indulged, there is a hitch somewhere either in head or temper. It is disguised selfishness, not magnanimity or refinement, which induces this flight from life's duties and pleasures.

But in the delineations of life and character presented by our author, it is assumed as the grand and heroic method, the only

resource for emotions keenly wounded, to yield, to fly from the intolerable sting; or if the feeling preternaturally excited be generosity, from henceforth to renounce personality, and to change into a fleeting shadow and a dream following after some absorbing, engrossing illusion. But whether the motive be good or bad, wherever there is power or strength of will, it shows itself by a renunciation of the life which nature and circumstance point out. Hence arises a sort of social earthquake: every one is being shaken out of his place; each leans upon, follows, devotes himself to another existence, which in its turn has no strength or hold, but reciprocally resigns its identity. The exigencies of the plot, no doubt, are answerable in good measure for this; but we can only say that nothing so strikes at the root of probability or of any strong interest in the fate of the characters, as this exaggeration of impulse, this disregard of abiding restraints and responsibilities. Take our author's latest work, which is simply one universal pursuit and *bouleversement*. Nobody holds his own, nobody keeps to his work: everybody is off at a tangent in the indulgence of some passion or another; everybody is a sacrifice. First, we have old Waife allowing himself to be transported, then at hide and seek with his grandchild, then in magnanimous flight from her; while the popular young clergyman falls into the mystic dance of pursuit after him. Then there is Arabella Crane dogging for twenty years the steps of the odious Losely, and Darrell, himself the impersonation of genius, with all the qualifications for success in a great career, now plunging into politics, now abruptly renouncing them; rushing off to the Continent at one time, hiding himself at home at another, with no more hold on his calling, or his calling on him, than the merest vagrant adventurer.

It has occurred to us that the inevitable, unmanageable stability of the middle classes, their subservience to certain stationary laws and dull permanence of life and duty may have been one reason of our author's alienation from and total want of sympathy with them. Whatever reverses his heart is exposed to, the merchant cannot at a moment's warning desert his counting-house, the attorney his clients, the doctor his patients: those who have to earn the bread they eat, are denied the luxury of unlimited locomotion: the wildest imagination shrinks from the assumption that a tradesman can desert his business and disappear for three years into Central Africa, and return to find things just as he left them. It will not do for him, we know, to fling himself into a chaise and four, bidding the postboys 'bear him away he cares not whither, for all places are alike hateful;' nor can he 'sow the road with gold,' to trans-

port him the quicker from his own agonising thoughts. His heart may be as sore as the others', but he must toil on, and learn patient resignation at home; a very different alternative, we own, from that chosen, for instance, by Maltravers, who, after one of his four decisive love affairs, finds it in the tent of an emir of the desert, and comes back not only cured, and open to fresh impressions, but with an excellent stud of the true Arab breed, on one of which he can mount the new object of his intensest devotion. As far as comfort goes, it may not be such a bad plan: it is often dull work to follow the routine of every day with a heavy heart, and it sometimes makes a dull man; but whether the real observer of character might not find more of the true sublime in the man who works on, with wounded affections and a bleeding memory, than in him who, when one excitement fails him, flies off to another, is altogether another question. We will admit, however, that the delineation of the one form of sorrow needs a wholly different class of sympathies from that which suffices to give interest to the other.

For this then, amongst other causes, our author has always viewed the middle classes with a cold and cynical eye. Thrown, while yet a boy, into what is technically called society, that polished struggling circle engaged all his attention and interest. There is a dazzle about it, no doubt, which makes other spheres repulsive. People must entirely get out of the whirl of the great world, or never have been in it, to judge of quiet, ordinary existence fairly. Our author has never allowed himself this retirement from its interests, therefore he has not got beyond a drawing-room and dining-room philosophy. Here is the only scene of his study, the only theatre from which he has sought to know something of men as they are. The rest is all left to fancy and satire. If people are not in the fashionable world, or have it not within their reach, the only mode in which they can afford worthy subject of speculation to the student is to become altogether outcast. Outcasts have not been content with mediocrity; they have had souls above the dead level of content in obscurity, or the equal degradation of winning credit in it. Provincial life, the life of towns, the life of trade, the life of order and civilisation without fashion, the common scene where the necessaries and decencies of life are secured by steady application to stated duties, and its pleasures are shared with others similarly employed, without one glimpse into the privileged circles: existence like this is simply repugnant to his imagination, it is dreary and tasteless; vegetation, not life. Human nature's daily food is not to the Bulwer Lytton taste. Vagabonds, thieves, gipsies, scamps of all degrees, know what

excitement is, and therefore stimulate the curiosity; but the monotonous application to commonplace creditable pursuits, the manners which these habits breed, the aspect of sober respectability they induce—it must be the greatest mystery of all the mysteries which this prolific fancy ever brooded over, harder than any riddle the sphinx ever set, to make out how the world ever came to be *full* of such beings—how there should be houses, streets, towns, countries full of them—until the great principle of waste comes in. Nature is proverbially lavish: it may take myriads of tradesmen to make one man of fashion. We own it is a difficult class to invest with romance: we should not have said a word had our author felt it out of his province, and let it alone, but his contempt is active and malevolent. In whatever sphere man is born, he cannot help having his aspirations. What is life without hope? yet what scorn does not our author bestow on the humble, bounded ambition which is forced to aim at something below universal dominion and world-ruling genius? The tradesman makes his son a doctor, because it is a ‘genteel’ profession, and he and the assumed gentility are alike set down; his wife puts a good face on their social standing, and we are called upon to loathe the good woman’s pretensions; the daughter has a lover; what can people with such vulgar names know of sentiment? To be alert, active, pleasantly conscious of existence in this lower life, to seek for and value such distinctions as are within the reach of ninety-nine people out of a hundred, is more paltry and spiritless than just to lie down and die, or rather never to come to life. Our author shows us intellects that will not stir or awake till the sun of gentility shines on them. A beautiful woman, born out of reach of the world of fashion, must do one of two things: she must escape in some violent and unnatural mode, or she must simply lie by—the mind slumbering, like Undine’s soul, till the touch of the awakener comes. She who can contentedly allow her mind to develop in the sordid scenes of trade, in the conversation of managing mothers, the poor, town politics of her pousy, meanly-prosperous father; who can throw herself with spirit into the homely occupations and still more homely gaieties of her own circle, grows, in the author’s excited imagination, into a sort of monster: her red hair and squint only image forth the harsher colours and more repulsive obliquity of her mind. Indeed, there is but one way of accounting for a temper so gallant towards the sex, depicting the women of the middle classes in so disparaging a light, which is, that his acquaintance with them may have been formed in a series of electioneering visits, the pains of a compulsory civility being subsequently avenged by a series of caricatures. Indeed, we have a

hint of this in one of his earlier novels, where, after defining the manners of different degrees in the following words—

‘The outward coarseness of the lowest orders, and the mental *grossièreté* of the highest, I can readily suppose it easy to forgive, for the former does not offend one’s feelings, nor the latter one’s habits ; but this base pretending, noisy, scarlet vulgarity of the middle ranks, which has all the rudeness of its inferiors with all the arrogance and heartlessness of its betters, this pounds and pence patchwork of the worst and most tawdry shreds and rags of manners, is alike sickening to one’s love of human nature and one’s refinement of taste’—‘Disowned,’ vol. i. p. 137.

the author afterwards gives his reasons in the person of the hero’s experienced friend, why it is well to penetrate this uninviting region of observation :—

‘You will find your host and hostess (the stockbroker and his wife) certainly of a different order to the persons with whom, it is easy to see, you have associated ; but at your happy age a year or two may well be thrown away upon observing the manners and customs of those whom in later life you may often be called upon to conciliate or perhaps control.’—‘Disowned,’ vol. i. p. 143.

Years and experience have no doubt modified notions thus uttered in the pride of youthful arrogance, and we meet with philosophical allusions to the ‘mighty middle class, in which our modern civilisation, with its faults and its merits, has established its stronghold ;’ but they show the natural bias. The class of the poor is in better favour, and we have a peasant-poet in ‘My Novel,’ glowing with all the aristocracy of genius, but unluckily he turns out to be a Prince Prettyman in disguise, and to have good blood in his veins after all ; and, in fact, this infusion is so dear to our author, that he cannot avoid assigning some tincture of it where least suspected to every character on which he bestows his sympathy. For example, Rienzi is described in history as the son of a tavern-keeper and a washerwoman, and his low birth is a *point* in his career : but we know not on what authority, except the author’s wishes, he is here represented as the illegitimate grandson of an emperor ; as though honest obscurity could not possibly give birth to heroes.

The mention of Rienzi leads us somewhat indirectly to a cursory notice of our author’s historical class of fiction. Such works as ‘Rienzi,’ ‘Harold,’ and ‘The Last of the Barons,’ are a testimony at once to the versatility of his powers and to the industry and application with which he has cultivated them. Sir E. B. Lytton values himself in having invented this class of historical novel, in which, unlike those of Sir W. Scott, the interest is made to centre in the historical facts and personages. With Shakspeare and the modern drama as examples, we cannot recognise the thought as new ; but all must allow that it is ably carried

out—*ably*, that is, with infinite care and pains, and in the last with the greatest success: but we own we think the author's mind too essentially modern for success in its highest sense. All that labour, reading, and study can do—all that a fancy forced into uncongenial exercise can achieve, is done. In the preface to 'Harold' we have a glimpse of what the labour is of composing a historical romance. He addresses the host under whose roof it was written, and appeals to the 'recent associations of a single winter:—

'With all those folios—giants of the gone world—rising round one daily more and more, higher and higher, Ossa upon Pelion, on chair and table, hearth and floor; invasive as Normans, indomitable as Saxons, tall as the tallest Danes (ruthless host, I behold them still)—with all those disburied spectres rampant in the chamber—all the armour rustling in thy galleries . . . say, in thy conscience, shall I ever return to the nineteenth century again?'—'Harold,' Preface, p. 18.

The 'associations,' no doubt, should not be 'of a single winter,' but of a *life*, really to reproduce a bygone age. We cannot doubt that Macaulay's boyhood was haunted by the scenes of his vivid Roman ballads; we know that the past held Sir W. Scott in a life-long thrall. No man can take it up just when he pleases: it must have long mastered him, ere he can give life to dead customs, dead manners, dead thoughts, dead belief, dead superstitions. Sir Walter had brooded over the age of 'Ivanhoe' till it, too, had a past. As we wander with Richard, and the jester, through the oak forest, we are made one with *that* present by being transported to the far distant, when those oaks were young, and Romans trod the soil. In the case of these romances, we are constantly pulled up to modern associations by some obstinately nineteenth-century allusion. The characters are made to think in our dialect, or in the rhapsodies so peculiar to the author. Whole pages, full of capital letters, stare at us with their vague solemnities. 'Youth the restless,' 'Death the still,' 'the three silences, Thought, Destiny, and the Grave,' are notes of a strain with which Sir E. B. Lytton's readers are only too familiar, but which, we cannot but suspect, would have been an unknown tongue to those who deliver these and many similar utterances.

'Rienzi,' as being the first in this line (if we do not except 'The Last Days of Pompeii'), shows visible constraint. The author in his preface considers himself withheld from many of the lighter graces of fiction, and condemned to the severe style. The strain at consistency is evident; we grow fatigued for the author. Characters and conversations sustained at tragic height, and never allowed to drop into colloquial nature, show an artist's hand, evince real success in 'keeping;' but we are

tired—the result is ponderous and unimpressive. We are painfully reminded of that elegant heaviness, the modern drama. Measured artificial prose is scarcely a more manageable vehicle than blank verse. The characters boast, dilate, betray their designs, show their cards, as much in the one as they have a prescriptive right to do in the other: nor can we settle the respective claim to nature of the ‘What ho, there!’ of legitimate drama, and the ‘Now out on thee, fair lady mine!’ of historical dialogue. But it must be hard work *inventing* in these inevitable fetters; even the great master, Sir Walter Scott, owns it, so that severe criticism would be merely ignorance.

‘Harold’ is an advance, both in power and interest, over ‘Rienzi.’ The antiquarian research is great, and perhaps somewhat obtrusively paraded, as newly-acquired knowledge is apt to be. The author has evidently tried to master an important and disputed era; and if the reader can hold his judgment suspended, and think for himself, he may be a real gainer by the perusal. ‘The Last of the Barons’ is the most graphic and spirited of this series. By the aid of those ‘four great pleas of the crown,’ on which Jenny Denison rang the changes, a great deal of bustle and excitement is kept up; the characters are elaborately drawn, the scenes varied, and the information (that pill which the novel reader is sometimes slow to swallow when he bargains only for entertainment,) is well gilded and made fairly palatable. We do not, however, consider our author endowed with that instinct for truth to make him a perfectly trustworthy guide: we often perceive his prejudices and predilections misleading him, and we find always that his first impulse is to alter facts—*minor* facts where he can. He considers these all to be subject to the author’s requirements, and of course we ought to be lenient to the exigencies of a plot; but his imagination seems peculiarly restive against literal truth, which he has a general notion he can mend. An extreme instance of this we see in ‘Eugene Aram,’ where the known *facts* are altered and profusely exaggerated, till the story is a simple invention. But we see the same tendency in ‘Rienzi,’ and we suspect something of it in ‘The Last of the Barons:’ indeed, we find the writer claiming in both these ‘private life,’ with its domain of incident and passion, as the legitimate appanage of a novelist and ‘poet;’ a demand to which his readers ought always to be fully alive, or they will run away with some wrong impressions.

But it is impossible to dwell on all the productions of this versatile fancy. We must pass by that other of the world’s *last* scenes, ‘Pompeii;’ graceful, whether real or not; and ‘Lucretia,’ where the actors are all fiends or angels; where we are led

through scenes which perhaps were intended to make our blood freeze, and our hair stand on end, but which, owing probably to the facile flow of the style which glosses everything with its fine polish, may be best defined as agreeable, easy reading; and 'Zanoni,' the fruit of a caprice of study, leading our author off among the Rosicrucians in search of the elixir of life, and its possible effects if discovered. We doubt if it is within the compass of human imagination to conceive of an earthly immortality. The readers of 'Zanoni' certainly do not find themselves any nearer to an apprehension of it; but at least they may be reconciled to their shorter span when they observe that the sole privileges of immortality seem to lie in longer utterances of that misty prose, which, in a lesser degree, forms our author's relaxation, and his readers' resting-points in all his works.

'The Caxtons' may be regarded as a new era at once in our author's versatile career and in his popularity. Discarding the man-of-the-world, not to say rakish, air, with which his old friends were familiar, he there assumed the sage, and chose home and the quiet virtues as his theme. It is a domestic idyl; we breathe serener air. The public were charmed; people who never read novels were all reading 'The Caxtons,' and 'rising better men' from its perusal: and it is a very graceful, pleasing performance; a gentle, able, scholarly affectation, if we may apply that invidious word to what is avowedly not natural, but a series of very successful imitations of our English classics. We are introduced to various persons, who, to be sure, never could have lived; we listen to colloquies which never could have been spoken; we live in a new world. The author has wished to show that he can depict, in the midst of the stir and bustle of society, another manner of existence, where thought not action is to reign. He constructs certain well-contrasted embodiments of thought, feeling, and opinion, and leads them through the various adventures and misfortunes of life with no disturbance of their philosophy or of power to give it expression. Every trial is glided through without interruption from passion, but triumphantly overcome either by constitutional humour, or amiability, or philosophy. Every one speaks characteristically, if it be characteristic to express oneself in every emergency in a neat little essay or epigram, after the manner of Addison, or Steele, or Goldsmith. We read, amused with this sort of improvement on what we have been used to; each personage keeping so clearly distinct from the rest, and not really the least influenced by them; learning nothing from one another in any byway; not, as it were, possessing an existence away from the

stage, on which we see them. The student and arch humourist, Mr. Caxton, with the appropriate book always between his fingers, an apt quotation and a profound comment always ready, always listened to, and, we will add, always worth listening to (for the learning is admirably managed); the brother Roland always with his point of honour; Uncle Jack always with a new scheme, which always takes people in; the mother always beaming love on her husband and her son. We are lifted out of the confusion of humanity into a sort of colloquial elysium, and are content for a time to miss nature. We have even a glorified man of the world in harmony with these creations—Sir Sedley Beaudesert, a very pleasant person, who gently holds us on to that high life from which we can never be really parted in our author's company. Here, too, the conventional statesman fits in not inharmoniously, though we own we can never be introduced to Sir E. B. Lytton's politicians—and there are many of them—without a fresh surprise at the deliberate departure from facts, as he must know them, in which it is his nature to indulge. He has some acquaintance and experience of premiers, which we have not; but we know they are men, Englishmen, *busy* men; therefore when Trevanion, immersed in the war of parties and the business of the nation, reads letters of a dozen pages long from a youth of eighteen, and answers him with equal prolixity—when he expresses himself thus to the same boy whom he had only known a few hours, “And mark you, sir, never care three straws for praise or blame—leather and prunella. Praise and blame are *here!*” and he struck his hand upon his breast with almost passionate emphasis, we withhold our credit in spite of the narrator's better opportunities of knowing the manner of men which statesmen are.

This impressive action, so familiar with the novel-reader and play-goer, so alien from our actual experience, reminds us of another point in which all fiction, and these works especially, are at variance with living manners—thus revealing to us what an under-current of rebellion must rankle in the mind and fancy at the exclusiveness—shall we say intactibility?—of our material frame. We pass through social life, letting one another alone either for good or evil, for love or hatred; even the friendly shake of the hand which custom enforces is too often a shuddering process: the rare and perfunctory ceremonial no sooner performed than each frame recedes, shakes off, recoiling as it were from close contact. Rooms full, streets full, churches full, meet and part without collision. If in crowded vehicles or assemblies this liberty of the person is infringed, how sensible is it of the indignity, how gladly it shakes itself free from the contamination! Enemies meet day after day, year after year: their minds quarrel, their bodies stand apart. It is only in the

height of self-abandonment that antipathy leads to action. Even where hatred is mortal and extends to assault of the body it is done in civilised communities with least outrage to the fastidious instinct. Foes stand aloof and slay from a distance. We believe there are men who pass their public and merely social existence without contact of any sort with their fellows; who do not know, from actual experience of the world out of doors, but that they live in a realm of appearances only. They may not be aware of this, nobody realises it, or all parties willingly ignore it: but still there is, as we say, a rebellion against it. We are practical Berkleians: like Anacreon's grasshopper we are all fleshless, bloodless, all but bodiless. Wherever the imagination has play and gets loose from experience, what a cordial, effusive, expansive, demonstrative race we are! Wherever it arranges things according to its own ideas of the natural, this whole class of shy, reserved sensations, which influences every day of our lives, is of no account: the body is used as the instrument for expressing the emotions of the mind without any regard for its sensitive nervous organisation. Truthful representations of life depart from truth here, and people are quite content that they should. Reading, and realising scenes are mental processes; men who offer to their best friends two fingers of an unwilling hand like to suppose quite another state of things on paper. Cold habit fetters the movements, but the fancy warms itself in a genial, open-armed cordiality, or exults in the ready blow and vigorous onslaught.

This, we say, is common to romance; but we cannot but think that our author exceeds his fellows in licence, and passes the line of sympathy. Heroes are proverbially a strenuous race; their limbs are allowed vigorous play: but his heroes go beyond the sanction of even our fancy. As an instance, let our reader consider how sacred from contact he has preserved his own throat, how little temptation he has ever felt to invade the throat of his neighbour, whether he likes him or not; and then observe how open to aggression this important organ is in this whole series, how instinctively the angry man clutches it. One good-natured young fellow all but strangles three several men, on distinct occasions, on what appears to us to be but slight provocation. In addition to this favourite outrage, we have Maltravers seizing an athletic rival, and whirling him round in his arms with serious thought of throwing him out of window; and many similar feats, which, if performed at all within our own knowledge, are certainly not performed by gentlemen. However, this is not our main ground of quarrel with our author, for after all, though we seldom use our fists, there

are occasions when it would be an indulgence to use them; but what we do make a stand at is the affectionate demonstrations of his elderly gentlemen, which in no region of the English fancy are ever welcome—those aged brothers who throw themselves on each other's breasts—those open arms embracing all the world, find no response anywhere; we recoil as they advance towards us. We are glad we do not know Mr. Waife: even Mr. Caxton's bosom is too general a refuge: Mr. Darrell's stalwart form is a support we do not envy his friends. We cannot feel with those young men who sob out their ingenuous hearts at one another's feet, or on each other's necks, or on the shoulders and on the breasts of sagacious counsellors. We are glad that in the circle of our own acquaintance men of ripe age are content to show their good will by a cool shake of the hand. We greatly prefer our actual to the author's ideal, and hastily consign such visions to the 'Sarcophagus and the Urn,' and that 'Genius of the extinguished torch' who occupies so large a space in his musings.

But to return from a digression suggested by the peculiarly demonstrative manners of the Caxton family.—As a whole this work is marked by a moderation foreign to the author's general style. We see judgment and self-restraint at work, and come upon passages of gentle humour and bland common sense, which contrast most agreeably with the mere riot of the pen in which he so often expatiates. After familiarising our ears with colossal fortunes and lavish expense, it is quite refreshing, for instance, to come upon the following testimony to the merits and pretensions of sixpence, which appeals to all our hearts:—

'Now my mother, true woman as she was, had a womanly love of show in her quiet way—of making "a genteel figure" in the neighbourhood—of seeing that sixpence not only went as far as sixpence ought to go, but that, in the going, it should emit a mild but imposing splendour—not, indeed, a gaudy flash—a startling Borealian coruscation, which is scarcely within the modest and placid idiosyncracies of sixpence—but a gleam of gentle and benign light, just to show where a sixpence had been, and allow you time to say "Behold!" before

"The jaws of darkness did devour it up!"'

—'The Caxtons,' vol. ii. p. 277.

'My Novel,' which followed and is connected with 'The Caxtons,' has shared its favour with the public. It is marked by many of the author's most felicitous characteristics: knowledge of men conveyed in graceful, epigrammatic language, variety of character, play of incident, and that business, and action, and perfect mastery of the machinery of his art, in which no one surpasses him, and which gives the experienced novelist such advantage over younger efforts. But it is prolix to wear-

ness; the characters, many of them well conceived, and some of them most ably worked out (we would adduce especially, as an original conception, Dr. Riccabocca), are brought into impossible combinations; the villainy is both tedious and out of all nature; the virtue is extravagant, the sentiment maudlin. And yet the author has thrown into the story some real feeling. The picture of his young poet must have some personal touches, and especially we are sure that the history of his great poem, which failed because the world was not in the humour for it, must, as we think, pathetically convey the author's disappointment at the cold reception of his own poem—his epic, 'King Arthur,' which he no doubt regarded as his consummate effort, his greatest work, and the surest foundation of his fame.

We have reached our limits with little more than an occasional mention of the author's last work, with the whimsical title of 'What will he do with it?' which might be expected to engage our largest attention. But we own we consider it a fact rather to be contemplated and accounted for than to be deliberately, piece by piece, criticised. Not that the story is wholly without spirit or interest; but as a delineation of life, character, and manners, how can we enter seriously upon it? how can we analyse the large, pompous impossibility? how grapple with the turbid feeling and inflated expression? Which of the personages are actuated by any of the motives which would govern men in their circumstances? who is guided by a glimpse of reason? how can quiet sense deal with such a flourish of sentimentalism? All these defects are so patent, so open to the eyes of all men, so prodigious, that readers who approve as they read do it in spite of them. They are deliberately satisfied with a picture of life that contradicts all their experience; and if people are willing to do without truth and nature, we do not deny to the story many of the minor merits of fiction. It is marked, too, by a recantation, perhaps not designed, of the author's earlier view of the power of 'Fate' and 'Circumstance,' and is written with a facility in the mere execution which convinces us that he will soon attain the power of writing novels in his dreams.

The whole series of Sir E. B. Lytton's works may be regarded as a homage to society, as a sort of apotheosis of the class and of the man whom society agrees to honour—of a Man gifted by every distinction of nature and of fortune, and set up as a mark above his fellows. The appreciation of personal beauty, especially its manly type, and the enthusiasm which the subject inspires, is something quite beyond the usual licence of novelists. The author arrests the narrative continually to apostrophise the personal graces of his heroes, and pauses to sun himself in their lustre. It seems as if we were always being ushered

into the awful presence of the Apollo. And fain would he invest his heroes with a touch of the god's immortality. Those qualities, personal and intellectual, which fill the eye and rule the fancy, he would willingly endow with a perpetual youth. And in his own sphere this accomplished artist feels the power to baffle time, to retard the hated ravages of years: he wreathes his favourites with an amaranthine garland. With him the gifts which charm, which dazzle, which inspire passion are not transient, as the sage defines them, but last through generations. Years only teach our author the fallacies of moralists. As a youth he was content to represent youth as beautiful and charming. As manhood advanced he realised the superior nobleness of fruition, its stronger grasp, its more potent spell over passionate emotions, over man's homage, woman's love. Now, time waits on his idols only to add dignity to the form, majesty to the 'crest,' grace and power to the address, till his latest ideal is forced, near upon his grand climacteric, to retreat from a fair society where his fascinations wake emotions not in his power to return. Perhaps we are many of us not unfamiliar with such illusions: it is hard to believe in the effect of years on ourselves; that we are actually day by day losing something which we would fain keep: but these demurs hold a shy and unacknowledged place in common minds. But the author learns to trust himself, and to have confidence in his doubts as well as his impulses: he has a world where he can rule things as he pleases, where he is among the potentates. So, as the tyrant lashed the waves into submission, as our great Elizabeth shivered the mirror which gave back a false image, so Sir E. B. Lytton holds Time in check and forbids his changes.

And yet if here he exceeds his powers, there is a dominion over time which we will not dispute with him. He has possessed a spell, if not to retard time, yet to make the hours fly lightly, which might else have brooded heavy and sad over the careworn and the weary. His fancy, his genius, his varied resource have many a time lifted a load of trouble from heart and brow, and lapped the spirit in dreams till it was refreshed and strengthened to bear the inevitable burden. Such is the province of fiction—its mission in this work-day world; and none can deny our author his share in the labour and the praise—praise which may be the more frankly, unreservedly given, since the stream of invention has cleared itself from those turbid infusions which marred its earlier flow—since the love of paradox has yielded to a maturer perception, content to view moral questions not as a mere field for speculation, not as food for an excited imagination, but in the settled light of reason and experience.

IV.

THE COMMERCIAL CRISIS OF 1857 AND THE CURRENCY.

1. *Report from the Select Committee on the Bank Acts, together with the Evidence, &c. 30th July, 1857.*
2. *Report from the Select Committee on the Bank Acts, together with the Evidence, &c. 1st July, 1858.*

THE two bulky folios bearing the above titles contain, it is needless to say, a large store of instructive facts and valuable material for commercial history. The character of the subject will, it is to be feared, make them sealed books to the majority. The 'general reader' will shrink from the exertion of perusing them. Even of those whose life is spent in the transactions of money-dealing or commerce, probably but a small number will have the courage or the leisure to explore their contents. But to the well-braced intellect, which takes pleasure in a keen and well-sustained controversy, these volumes will prove by no means unattractive. If the subject of the currency has become somewhat of a bugbear to the public, it is owing to the folly and presumption of those shallow persons who have chosen it for the display of their perverse conceit and intolerable tediousness. In truth, the principles of monetary science form a study peculiarly well adapted to exercise the powers of a well-trained and logical mind. Such readers may derive not only interest but delight from the keen encounter of intellect here exhibited—a great parliamentary discussion, in which, setting aside the accidental distinction of member and witness, such men as Lord Overstone, Sir George Lewis, Mr. Cardwell, Mr. Wilson, Mr. Norman, and Mr. John Stuart Mill are the disputants.

The original Committee on the Bank Acts was appointed early in the session of 1857, Sir George Cornwall Lewis being then Chancellor of the Exchequer. The inquiry then intended to be made was as to the operation of the Bank Act, passed in 1844 under the auspices of Sir Robert Peel. Nine years had elapsed since the preceding inquiry into this subject, which originated in the commercial crisis of 1847. The floating murmurs and desultory criticisms on the currency laws, which, amidst the fluctuations of trade, are ever and anon breaking forth in public journals and speeches, had, in the course of this

interval, swelled to an amount, not indeed very large or formidable, but which constituted, in the judgment of the ministers of the day, a sufficient ground for the renewal of a parliamentary investigation. The Committee was first nominated in February; but their proceedings being abruptly terminated by the dissolution of parliament, another Committee, consisting, with but a few exceptions, of the same individual members, was appointed after the reassembling of Parliament in May, 1857. The tribunal to which this important task was delegated consisted of the members on either side of the house most noted for their knowledge of financial and monetary affairs; and it was presided over, except during a short period, by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The examination was directed solely to the principles of the existing currency laws. The Committee examined the governor and deputy-governor of the Bank, Lord Overstone, Mr. Norman, Mr. Hubbard, Mr. Mill, Mr. Newmarch, Mr. D. B. Chapman, and some other members of the banking and trading community. The termination of the session having arrived, the Committee agreed merely to report the evidence to the house, unaccompanied by any judgment or comment of their own; but their investigation being still incomplete, they recommended that it should be resumed in the ensuing session. Little did the Committee, or, indeed, any person at that moment anticipate the catastrophe which was then impending. In the autumn of 1857 the storm burst over the commercial world with terrific suddenness and severity. The fabric of mercantile credit was shaken to its centre. The crisis of 1847 was surpassed in its worst features of disaster and panic by this new convulsion. Once more, with a view to avert still worse consequences, the statute of 1844 was suspended by the act of the government. The transgression of the law required an indemnity from Parliament, which was accordingly convened for that express purpose in December. The indemnity was granted; but at the same time the committee of inquiry of the preceding session was reappointed, and, in addition to the duty of reporting on the Bank Acts, was instructed to inquire into the causes of the recent commercial distress, and to investigate how far it had been affected by the laws regulating the currency.

The chair of the Committee, during the session of 1858, through the whole period of which the inquiry lasted, was occupied by Mr. Cardwell. The causes of the late convulsion of trade now formed the primary and the effect of the banking laws the secondary object of investigation. The currency discussion assumed more of a practical and less of a theoretical

shape. The supporters and the opponents of Sir R. Peel's Act, however, respectively maintained their ground, and both parties claimed to find in the late disastrous events a fresh confirmation of their respective doctrines. Upon the chairman devolved the not easy task of stating the conclusions of the Committee in a Report which should carry the weight of their united judgment, and embody the substance of the evidence in a shape that might as little as possible compromise the adherents of discordant theories on the currency. The address with which this difficult feat was achieved is testified by the fact, that out of 21 members of the Committee, 19 voted for the adoption of the chairman's Report; two members only, Mr. Cayley and Mr. Spooner, recording their votes in opposition to it. Each of the two gentlemen last named proposed a separate Report of his own, of which the author himself was, in either case, the sole supporter. The Report thus adopted by the Committee, may be characterised as a 'skilful' document. Its distinctive merits are best expressed by such an epithet. Remarkable is the contrast between this paper and the Bullion Report of 1811, which immortalised the name of Horner. The authority of that celebrated production is enduring; the interest of this is necessarily ephemeral. Mr. Horner's 'Report' was, in reality, a luminous and comprehensive disquisition on the laws of monetary science—a repertory of sound principles, and a masterpiece of logical ratiocination. Mr. Cardwell's paper is a clear and well-compiled narrative of the leading events of the great crisis of 1857, in which the commercial features of the case are prominently displayed, and the ruin in which the chief sufferers involved themselves and others is clearly connected with their own misconduct. The operation of the currency laws is more lightly and incidentally mentioned. The great points in dispute between the adherents of the Act of 1844 and the disciples of Mr. Tooke, which involve the truth or falsehood of the theory of that Act, are left untouched, or but cursorily noticed. 'The evidence on this part of the subject,' says the Report, 'is interesting in the highest degree to all who make the scientific study of the most abstruse questions of political economy their pursuit. But a review of that evidence would appear necessarily to involve subjects of controversy on which your Committee would be unable to arrive at any conclusion without much difference of opinion, and they are, therefore, desirous of excluding these subjects from their report.'—P. xxiii.

But while thus disclaiming the attempt to solve the Gordian knots of monetary controversy, the compiler of the Report has dexterously thrown in here and there a word of approval as to

the working of the Act, or a favourable allusion to its results ; which, without provoking exception from dissentient members of the Committee, convey, on the whole, an impression decidedly friendly to the existing system. In fact, so far as regards the policy of the Bank Act, the report may be described as a ' compromise,' in which, however, the balance of advantage is clearly in favour of the measure. The result is to produce in our minds a conviction that the principles involved in Sir R. Peel's legislation have received a renewed sanction, and the law itself an increased stability, from the investigations of the Committee.

We should at the same time convey a false impression of our meaning, if we were understood to imply that the conclusions thus dexterously stated in the Report were unfairly drawn, or were at variance with the general tenor of the evidence. On the contrary, we believe the facts of the great crisis which was the subject of inquiry to be correctly set forth, the disasters to be traced to their true cause, and the sound and trustworthy portions of the evidence (where there was much of an opposite character) to be justly discriminated. If, upon such controverted points as convertibility, or over-issue, or the effect of currency on prices, it was impossible to get the Committee to agree, it was doubtless better to leave those knotty questions unsolved and to rest content with a general inference in favour of the practical working of the Act. More especially should the friends of the present law be content to acquiesce in a verdict which throws the gravamen of the crisis on commercial misconduct, and dwells almost exclusively on that aspect of the case, since it has been their contention from first to last,—alike in 1847 and in 1857—that commercial, not monetary causes were at the bottom of the disasters : while their opponents, on the other hand, loudly insisted that trade, generally speaking, was blameless, and that the fountain-head of all mischief was in the arrangements of the currency.

Against the latter view of the events under inquiry, the contents of the second Blue Book bear melancholy evidence. The story of the crisis of 1857 is told in one sentence—Unsound, not to say fraudulent, trade and speculation at home, receiving the impulse which led to its ruin from a convulsion abroad. The blow fell suddenly, but it must have fallen sooner or later. The wholesale failure of the United States banks gave the fatal momentum ; but had that event not occurred, some other accident would as surely have precipitated the fall of that edifice of false credit which had no more stability than a house of cards.

The deterioration in the tone of mercantile morality, which

many recent events have brought to light, is one of the most disheartening features of the present day. It is the slave in the chariot of our commercial triumphs. Such laxity is no doubt a natural consequence of that vast and rapid increase in wealth which dazzles the eyes and kindles the emulation of unscrupulous speculators. 'He that maketh haste to be rich shall not be innocent.' The spectacle of vast fortunes netted by one or two successful operations, of wealth suddenly generated out of nothing by some audacious venture, has a great tendency to relax the integrity of the trading class. How to carry on a large and lucrative business with a very slender capital,—that is the problem which many, whose morality is as slender as their capital, are eager to solve. The deficiency of capital may indeed, as every one is aware, be supplemented by credit, and to a certain extent legitimately; but how is credit to be procured? Credit itself needs some basis, and this, too, may happen to be deficient. But if A, who needs credit, and B, who is in the same predicament, agree mutually to lend that article to each other, and if some third person who has command of capital, whether his own or belonging to others, is willing to accommodate either party with funds upon the credit of the other, the difficulty is for the moment solved. Such practices are the notorious resource of insolvent spendthrifts in private life; and if the system of raising the wind by accommodation bills can be applied, only in a less disreputable shape, and on a grander scale, to the operations of trade, then, so long as the sun of commerce shines, and prices are sustained, the circumstance of being very short of capital need offer no impediment to the speculator's success. Suppose, indeed, the reverse of this state of things: suppose deficient harvest, war, or revolution, markets falling, trade stagnant, money scarce, and 8 or 10 per cent. the rate of discount; then, indeed, the whole system is changed, and it is *sauve qui peut* with the luckless speculators and their still more unfortunate creditors.

The mercantile phrase for that form of fictitious credit here referred to, which formed so conspicuous a feature in the failures of 1857, is that of 'open credits.' The nature and extent of these transactions were explained to the committee by two witnesses, who having been much employed in the winding up of the insolvent houses, both in this crisis and the preceding one of 1847, were able to speak with full experience of the working of the system. These witnesses were Mr. Ball of the firm of Quilter and Ball, and Mr. Coleman, another eminent accountant of London. Neither of these gentlemen profess to be conversant with theories of the currency, nor to be particu-

larly conversant with the provisions of the Act of 1844, but both concur in describing the calamities of the two great crises to the same principal cause, viz., over-trading and abuse of credit. They notice, however, this difference between the two periods: many of the houses which fell in 1847, they say, had once been wealthy, but had long ceased to be so. Those of 1857 had, with few exceptions, never possessed adequate capital, but carried on extensive transactions by fictitious credit. The transactions in question are thus described by Mr. Coleman:—

1938. 'The nature of the transactions to which I allude was the system of open credits which were granted; that was, by granting to persons abroad liberty to draw upon the house in England to such extent as had been agreed upon between them; those drafts were then negotiated upon the foreign exchanges, and found their way to England, with the understanding that they were to be provided for at maturity. They were principally provided for, not by staple commodities, but by other bills that were sent to take them up.

1939. 'There being no real basis to the transaction, but the whole affair being the means of raising a temporary command of capital for the convenience of the individuals concerned?—Exactly so; merely a bare commission hanging upon it; a banker's commission was all that the houses in England got upon those transactions, with the exception of receiving the consignments probably of goods from certain parties, which brought them a merchant's commission upon them, but they formed a very small amount in comparison with the amount of credits which were granted.'

One house mentioned by Mr. Ball as an illustration of the system, was, at the time of its suspension, under obligations to the world to the extent of almost 900,000*l.*: its capital, at the last time of taking stock, was under 10,000*l.* Its business was chiefly the granting of 'open credits:' i. e. the house permitted itself to be drawn upon by foreign houses, without any remittance previously or contemporaneously made; but with an engagement that it should be made before the acceptance arrived at maturity. In these cases, the inducement to give the acceptance was a commission, varying from $\frac{1}{2}$ to $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. The acceptances were rendered available by being discounted through the banks, of whose operations we shall have occasion to speak presently.

The form of transaction above described is not represented by these two witnesses as entirely novel; but they concur in stating that it is comparatively recent, and has grown up within the last few years to be an abuse of great magnitude, in a manner, and to an extent, of which they had no former experience. It seems to be principally connected with the trade of Sweden, Denmark, and other countries of the north of Europe. 'One house at Newcastle is described as having conducted

before 1854 a regular trade in the Baltic. They were not great people, but were respectable people, and were doing a moderately profitable trade. They unfortunately entered upon this system of granting credits; and in the course of three years the following result ensued: viz., in 1854, their capital was between 3000*l.* and 4000*l.*; in 1857, they failed for 100,000*l.*, with the prospect of paying about 2*s.* in the pound.'¹ Another instance is that of a house in which the capital was under 7000*l.*; the total engagements were 320,000*l.*, the amount of assets expected to be realized about 37,000*l.* The nature of the business is described as the 'open-credit system.' It is, as Mr. Ball says, 'nothing more nor less than what is well known in this country as a circle of accommodation bills;' though in point of form, and in outward appearance to the world, the operations appear to be perfectly legitimate, and to represent legitimate transactions. And Mr. Coleman is asked, and answers as follows—

2096. 'Did you ever know a larger amount of bad and unwholesome business done than has been shown by the occurrences of the last autumn?—There never has been; there never has been the means of doing it; there have never been the facilities.'

The Committee observe that 'the obvious effect of such a system is first unduly to enhance, and then, while it continues, to sustain the price of commodities.' Report, p. xv.

It is manifest, however, that in order to the carrying out of that reckless system of overstrained credit which has been just described, another element is requisite. There must be an extraordinary facility of liquidating the commercial paper which is manufactured in such profusion. Those who deal in money must combine with those who employ money, for without the co-operation of the two parties the trade could not be carried on. And this brings us to the share which certain of the provincial joint-stock banks undoubtedly had in producing the catastrophe in question. Mr. Coleman gives an interesting opinion on this subject—

1950. *Chairman.*] 'Can you explain how it was that this facility for obtaining capital arose?—I attribute the facilities, to a great extent, to the vast sums of money which were held by joint-stock banks which were forced to be used, as one cause, and I attribute them, as another, to the indiscriminate mode in which some joint-stock banks (and I would there exclude the metropolitan ones) gave credit to parties who were undeserving of it.'

1951. 'Can you illustrate that by any examples of banks within your knowledge?—The examples in the case of the Western Bank of Scotland are numerous in the public prints, which have not come under my own

¹ Evidence, 1858. Ans. 1723.

observation. The examples in the case of the Northumberland and Durham District Bank have, to some extent, come under my own observation; the case of the Borough Bank of Liverpool has also come under my observation. With regard to the Borough Bank of Liverpool, to my own knowledge, at the time of their suspension there were more than 2,500,000*l.* of their discounted bills held in London.

1952. *Mr. Hankey.*] 'Bills which they had discounted?—Yes, and which were rediscounted.'

1953. *Chairman.*] 'Are you at all acquainted with the original character of that paper, that is to say, whether it had any other credit belonging to it except what it derived from the endorsement of the Borough Bank?—It had the discredit of having very bad names on a great portion of it.'

1962. *Mr. Hankey.*] 'I think you said, that you excepted London banking establishments from those houses which had given credits to an extent that you thought injurious?—I meant, by that observation, to imply reckless credits.'

1963. 'Do you think that any undue system of credits was given by the London bill-brokers?—I do.'

1964. 'When you excepted London houses, you excepted only the London joint-stock banks?—Yes, with regard to reckless credit.'

1965. 'Do you think that any system of reckless credit has been given during the last year by discount houses in London?—I think that the London discount houses have given reckless credit in rediscounting joint-stock bank paper; I think that they have rediscounted that paper upon the faith of the particular bank, without regard to the names which may have been upon the bills, either the drawers, the acceptors, or the endorsers.'

1966. 'Do you think that that has produced the effect of giving an undue supply of money to insolvent houses, and thereby enabling them to continue a reckless system of trading?—Undoubtedly.'

This witness further explains his answer (1950), with reference to the influences operating on the joint-stock banks, by reason of their practice of paying interest upon deposits, to find profitable employment for the vast sums accumulated in their hands, without being overcautious as to the character of the security.

1971. 'You assign certain evils to the joint-stock bank system?—I assign them in this way, that the joint-stock banks were forced (I will say even as much as that) to take large sums of money, and they were obliged to use them, and under such circumstances they gave credit to parties, whilst all matters were going on brightly, to a larger extent than they otherwise would have done; and I think that when fear began to show itself of a change of circumstances, they curtailed that practice to a very large extent and put on a pressure, by which great sacrifices were compelled to be made by parties to meet their engagements.'

As the facilities afforded by the joint-stock banks in discounting unsound paper ministered greatly to the intemperate speculations that preceded the crisis, so the downfall of some of these concerns, under the pressure of their enormous liabilities, had a very material effect in producing the convulsion. The three great establishments already referred to by Mr. Coleman's

evidence were the chief delinquents ; but the Western Bank of Scotland towers above them all, both in the flagrancy of its mismanagement and the frightful consequences of its fall. We do not here refer so much to the individual ruin and misery which the failure occasioned—though this can hardly be over-estimated—as to the immediate effect on the money-market, and on public feeling throughout the kingdom caused by the stoppage, occurring, as it did, in the very acme of the crisis, viz., on the 9th of November, two days only before the Bank of England was compelled to seek assistance from the government. Indeed, it appears clear from the evidence of the bank directors, that in that most critical week in November, when both the stock of bullion and the banking reserves were rapidly declining day by day, no single circumstance more aggravated their difficulties, or weakened the position of the bank, than the necessity of sending gold to Scotland, at the very moment when the English money-market demanded the utmost support. On the 10th and 11th alone, the gold sent to Scotland was upwards of 1,000,000*l.*, and a further supply was required. The governor of the Bank distinctly states (Answer 1057) that the transmission of coin to Scotland at this time was one of the main causes of that reduction of the reserve, which occasioned the necessity of issuing the government letter.

It will be interesting now to observe what had been the character and operations of this great banking association, which is thus proved to have had a large share in precipitating the crisis of 1857. We take the following sketch of the origin and transactions of the Western Bank of Scotland from the Report of the Committee.

47. 'The Western Bank of Scotland was founded in 1832. In 1834 it was already in difficulties, and their correspondents in London dishonoured their bills. They applied to the other banks for assistance, and received it, upon certain conditions. In the year 1838 they applied to the Board of Trade for letters-patent, which were refused. At this time the Bank of Scotland and other banks addressed a memorial to Mr. Poulett Thomson, alleging the breach of the conditions referred to. This memorial will be found in the appendix. In 1847 the Western Bank was again in difficulties, and was assisted by the Bank of England, receiving an advance of 300,000*l.* The then manager, Mr. Donald Smith, appears to have taken alarm from the occurrences of 1847 ; and in 1852, when he retired, the bank, though not in a satisfactory position, stood better than it had stood before, since 1847. When it failed on 9th November 1857, it appeared that the four insolvent houses of Macdonald, Monteith, Wallace, and Pattison, were indebted to it in the sum of 1,603,000*l.*; the whole capital of the bank being only 1,500,000*l.* One of the conditions of the copartnery was "that if it shall at any time appear, on balancing the company's books, that a sum equal to 25*l.* per centum on the advanced capital stock of the company has been lost in prosecution of the business

of the company, such loss shall, *ipso facto*, and without the necessity of any further procedure, dissolve and put an end to the company."

48. 'Mr. Fleming became assistant manager in July 1857, and at once examined the affairs. He estimated that even supposing the debts of these four houses (which had not yet become insolvent) were assumed to be good, there appeared on the face of the books as good assets 573,000*l.* of bad debts; and deducting the rest and guarantee fund, which then amounted to 246,000*l.* there remained an apparent deficiency or encroachment on the capital of the bank of 327,000*l.* This of itself nearly approached the limit which dissolved the partnership and put an end to the existence of the bank; and of this state of affairs Mr. Fleming believes that up to that time the directors were in a state of almost entire ignorance. In 1853, previously to the first meeting of the shareholders after Mr. Smith's departure, an examination was instituted preparatory to the annual balance. From a confidential paper, having marks upon it in the handwriting of the then manager, it appears that a sum of 260,000*l.* was reported to him as irrecoverable on one branch of the assets, which nevertheless appeared as good assets in the published balance-sheet. The mode in which this kind of disguise can be accomplished will perhaps be best understood by stating the manner in which a debt called Scarth's debt, comprised in a different branch of the assets, was disposed of. That debt amounted to 120,000*l.*, and it ought to have appeared among the protested bills. It was, however, divided into four or five open credit accounts, bearing the names of the acceptors of Scarth's bills. These accounts were debited with the amount of their respective acceptances, and insurances were effected on the lives of the debtors to the extent of 75,000*l.* On these insurances 33,000*l.* have since been paid as premiums by the bank itself. These all now stand as assets in the books. Though this substitution took place in 1848, yet down to the time when Mr. Fleming's examinations began to bring to light the true state of affairs, the six directors appear to have regarded these sums as part of the available property of the shareholders. This being the actual state of the accounts, the dividend was raised in 1854 from 7 to 8 per cent., and in 1856 to 9. Nine per cent. was the dividend declared in June 1857, at which date a very slight acquaintance with the books must have led to the strongest suspicion, not to say to the clear conviction, that for some time a considerable portion of the capital had been lost.

49. 'This bank had 101 branches throughout Scotland. It had connexions in America, who were allowed to draw upon it for the mere sake of the commission. At home it made advances upon "indents;" or, in other words, provided the manufacturer with the capital with which yet unmade cloth was thereafter to be produced. Its discounts, which in 1853 were 14,987,000*l.*, had been increased in 1857 (till 9th November) to 20,691,000*l.* With what care this business was conducted may appear from the circumstance that M'Donald's bills were accepted by 124 different parties; that only 37 had been inquired about, and in the case of 21 the reports received from the correspondents of the bank were unsatisfactory, or positively bad. Yet the credit given to M'Donald continued undiminished. The rediscounts of the bank in London, which in 1852 had been 407,000*l.*, rose in 1856 to 5,407,000*l.* The exchanges of notes in Edinburgh have been always against the Western Bank, and for an average of the last six years to an extent of not less than 3,000,000*l.* a year. This circumstance is accounted for by Mr. Fleming chiefly by reference to the nature of the transactions with M'Donald's and other houses in accommodation bills; 988,000*l.* were due to the bank from its own shareholders.'

We must confine ourselves to a more abridged account of the transactions of the two other banks before mentioned, referring those of our readers who wish to pursue the proceedings in fuller detail to the evidence of Mr. Kirkman Hodgson, M.P., a director of the Bank of England, and to that of Mr. Joshua Dixon. It appears that, in consequence of an application for assistance made towards the end of October, 1857, by the Northumberland and Durham Bank to the Bank of England, Mr. Hodgson was sent down from London by his colleagues to Newcastle, and there made a full examination into the accounts and liabilities of the concern. This gentleman's account of the state of things which his investigation brought to light is highly curious: the *exposé* itself is scandalous in the extreme. The subscribed capital of the bank was about 600,000*l.* Its liabilities, as then stated, were 2,600,000*l.*, of which there were 1,350,000*l.* of deposits, 1,150,000*l.* accounts current, and they had rediscounted 1,500,000*l.* Their assets were of a very peculiar nature indeed; the early realization of which would have been almost impossible. They had in overdrawn accounts 1,664,000*l.*, without any specific securities attached to them. Of this amount one of the directors candidly admitted that 400,000*l.* must be considered totally bad, and ought to have been written off long before, though they still remained in the account as good debts. This statement at once showed that any attempt to help them, short of taking up the whole concern, and liquidating it for them, would be perfectly useless. It was evident that the whole capital was gone; and, looking at the character of the securities, Mr. Hodgson came to the conclusion that the bank was totally insolvent. Being much struck with the extraordinary losses which had taken place, Mr. Hodgson pressed his inquiries rather closely; and after some hesitation on the part of his informants, the fact came out that there was a very large debt with the Derwent Iron Company. This was a concern very intimately connected with the bank, the same individuals being largely interested in both concerns. It had been very much mismanaged: in fact, it had never made any profits at all, even in the best years of the ironmasters, and had gone on absorbing the money of the bank unchecked by the directors. The total liability of the Iron Company to the bank was stated to Mr. Hodgson at 750,000*l.* Another charge resulting from bills which came back upon the bank, afterwards increased this amount to 947,000*l.* Against the 2,600,000*l.* of liabilities, Mr. Hodgson says that 1,000,000*l.* of the securities taken were the most extraordinary for any bank to hold that he ever saw. There were large amounts of the Iron Company's debentures, mortgages on their plant, mortgages—not, however, being a first

charge—on building speculations, and building-land and houses, and securities of works and manufactures of different sorts. With the exception of about 1,000,000*l.*, the securities held were absolutely unmarketable. The bank had been in similar difficulties in 1847, and from the same cause, and had then been assisted by the Bank of England.

‘ This disclosure was the result of an examination which lasted about two hours; yet the bank had declared, at the last half-yearly meeting, a dividend of seven per cent., making to the shareholders a statement the substance of which showed a very prosperous state of things. Mr. Hodgson mentions that he remarked on the fact of their having declared a dividend in June, when it was admitted that half the capital was lost, and he asked how they could have done so; it was stated, in reply, *that there were so many persons who depended entirely for their livelihood on the dividends received, that they really could not bear to face them without paying any dividend.*’¹

The third case of banking mismanagement—though that is indeed far too mild a term—which we shall notice, is that of the Borough Bank of Liverpool, which stopped payment on the 27th October, 1857. Certain legal proceedings have made the public familiar with the name of Mr. Joshua Dixon, who was the managing director of this concern. We are bound to say that while it is impossible to acquit Mr. Dixon of culpability, his error appears to us to have been rather defect of moral courage than wilful breach of integrity. The statement made by him to the Committee was candid and explicit. The Borough Bank was originally a private bank, that of Messrs. Hope, in whose hands it was a prosperous concern: they retired from it in 1832. In 1847, it was obliged to have recourse to the Bank of England for support. Mr. Dixon became a shareholder and director in 1852. The board then consisted of twelve directors, but the whole administration was centred in two managing directors and the manager. On the 1st August, 1857, Mr. Dixon himself became a managing director, and thus describes the state in which he found the affairs of the bank: ‘ Its position,’ he says, ‘ was that of its available means being very much reduced, being far smaller than was at all consistent with the sound and safe position of any bank.’ Speaking irrespectively of any general commercial pressure, he told the Committee, that from the 1st August, when his attendance at the bank was daily, he became more and more convinced that the position of the bank was one of exceeding danger. When the commercial crisis supervened, of course the danger to the bank became imminent, and they applied to the Bank of England for assistance, some

¹ Evidence, 1858; 3528, 3537.

time between the 20th and the 23rd of October. The position, in general terms, of the bank was, that its assets were all locked up and unavailable; and that some 600,000*l.* or 700,000*l.* of its claims on its debtors, which had, until within a short time previously been considered good, could not be relied upon, even for ultimate realization. About 3,500,000*l.* of bills were at that time in London, under the indorsement of the Borough Bank of Liverpool; of which from 700,000*l.* to 1,000,000*l.* had no negotiable validity at all, except the indorsement of the Borough Bank. In consequence of some statements in the newspapers respecting the application to the Bank of England for assistance, a run upon the Borough Bank took place just before the end of October, and the doors were closed. The run lasted only two or three hours, but the cash in their hands was reduced to between 15,000*l.* and 20,000*l.*, while their liabilities on deposit were in all 1,200,000*l.*, of which 800,000*l.* were at call, and the remainder at periods varying from two to six months. The dividend of this bank, which had previously been maintained at seven per cent., had at the last meeting, held in July, 1857, been reduced to five, and a sum of 165,000*l.* was on the face of the report acknowledged to be lost. The real loss, as stated by Mr. Dixon to the Committee, was at least 940,000*l.*, being the total capital of the bank: whether it would exceed that sum or not, he then considered to be uncertain. The causes of this disastrous result he ascribes to 'want of discretion in the management;' to 'trusting parties who were not entitled to credit;' to 'holding bad securities, and giving bad credits.' In the selection of the parties to whom advances were made, Mr. Dixon says—'I do not see that any principle was followed at all.' The nine directors trusted the three managing directors, and the three managing directors trusted the paid manager. The manager is entirely acquitted of want of honesty; his own whole fortune was swept away: it was his incapacity and want of judgment, and the supine inattention of the nominal directors, that made shipwreck of the concern.

There is one curious passage in Mr. Dixon's evidence which is worth extracting, as it illustrates the reckless facility afforded to unsound credit by that practice of rediscounting, referred to by several witnesses as one of the bad practices that have recently grown up, and, indeed, one of the main causes of the late disasters. It appears that very large amounts of bills, having the name of the Borough Bank upon them, were from time to time rediscounted in London; at one time the amount was no less than 5,000,000*l.* The bill-brokers who took these instruments exercised so little discrimination with reference to the

credit of the parties liable, that only in one solitary instance had a bill been rejected. The witness, however, states that 'some of the bills were such, that unless he greatly mistook the acumen of the bill-brokers they would not have taken them, except upon the faith of the Borough Bank.' Mr. Dixon thus relates what took place between himself and one of the bill-brokers with reference to the subject.

'In incidental conversation about the whole affair, one of the bill-brokers made the remark that if it had not been for Sir Robert Peel's Act, the Borough Bank need not have suspended. In reply to that, I said, that whatever might be the merits of Sir Robert Peel's Act, for my own part, I would not have been willing to lift a finger to assist the Borough Bank through its difficulties, if the so doing had involved the continuance of such a wretched system of business as had been practised; and I said, "If I had only known half as much of the proceedings of the Borough Bank while I was a director" (referring to the time previous to the 1st of August, when I became a managing director), "as you must have known, by seeing a great many of the bills of the Borough Bank discounted, you would never have caught me being a shareholder;" the rejoinder to which was, "Nor would you have caught me being a shareholder; it was very well for me to discount the bills, but I would not have been a shareholder either."' ¹

To the failure of the three joint-stock banks above particularized must be added that of two large bill-broking houses, both of which had suspended in 1847, and afterwards resumed business. In 1857 both suspended again. The liabilities of one house in 1847 were, in round numbers, 2,683,000*l.*, with a capital of 180,000*l.*; the liabilities of the same house in 1857 were 5,300,000*l.*, the capital much smaller, probably not more than one quarter of what it was in 1847! The liabilities of the other firm were between 3,300,000*l.* and 4,000,000*l.* at each period of stoppage, with a capital not exceeding 45,000*l.*

The Committee say—

'These five houses contributed more than any others to the commercial disaster and discredit of 1857. It is impossible for your Committee to attribute the failure of such establishments to any other cause than to their own inherent unsoundness—the natural, the inevitable result of their own misconduct.'—Report, p. xxi.

After the perusal of cases of this kind, we cannot but feel that the genius of commercial morality is a little too lenient in its judgments, and a good deal too fastidious in its vocabulary. Indiscretion, mismanagement, over-trading, undue expansion of credit—such are the gentle terms which witnesses use before the Committee, and the world indulgently adopts, with reference

¹ Evidence, 1858. Ans. 4216.

to the conduct of traders, brokers, and bankers, the aim and tendency of which are to produce unconscionable gain to some, at the risk, in case of failure, of involving multitudes of innocent and confiding persons in utter ruin. In the eye merely of the law of England, some of the transactions described in these pages would be regarded as indictable frauds and criminal false pretences and conspiracies. In the language of sound morality they would be even still more sternly characterised. The carrying on of a gigantic trade with an infinitesimal capital by an arranged system of accommodation bills between one reckless adventurer and another; the absorption of the whole capital of banks in propping up the tottering speculations of partners or connections; the studied concealment of losses, falsification of accounts, and declaration of false dividends; the complicity between those who supply the money-market and those who drain it, in exchange for their notoriously worthless securities;—such are the peccadilloes of the mercantile and monied community which the conventional morality of commerce appears to regard in the light of venial frailties, or else endeavours to screen from blame by laying the ruin and misery occasioned by them at the door of the currency laws.

Of the confederated agencies thus shown to have concurred by their joint malpractices in producing the catastrophe, the Committee speaks as becomes a discreet parliamentary tribunal, in measured, though not indistinct language.

‘Thus we have traced a system under which extensive fictitious credits have been created by means of accommodation bills, and open credits, great facilities for which have been afforded by the practice of joint-stock country banks discounting such bills, and rediscounting them with the bill-brokers in the London market, upon the credit of the bank alone, without reference to the quality of the bills otherwise. The rediscounter relies on the belief that if the bank suspend, and the bills are not met at maturity, he will obtain from the Bank of England such immediate assistance as will save him from the consequences.’—Report, p. xxi.

That is to say, A, a speculator who has almost no funds and ought to have no credit, draws a bill which B, in similar circumstances, accepts, which C, the uncontrolled manager of a joint-stock bank, discounts, which D, the great London bill-broker rediscounts, knowing and caring nothing about the credit of the parties to the bill, but relying solely on the name of the joint-stock bank, of whose internal affairs he is in total ignorance, and looking ultimately, in case of pressure upon him (for he keeps no reserve of his own), to the Bank of England. Such is the system; and the confusion, panic, and wide-spread ruin of 1857 were its natural results.

But it is time to say something of the part taken by the Bank of England, and it was no unworthy or unimportant part, in these transactions. We have pronounced censure freely, but in terms by no means exceeding their deserts, upon certain parties justly responsible for the disasters of this period; but we have much greater satisfaction in awarding commendation to those by whose energy, foresight, and discretion the inevitable evils of the crisis were mitigated, and the still worse consequences that might otherwise have ensued were happily averted.

The evidence given to the Committee by witnesses of all shades of opinion testifies with one voice to the able and discreet performance of their duties in a time of extreme peril and difficulty by the directors of the Bank of England. Placed in a position of twofold responsibility—on the one hand as guardians of the circulation, on the other as depositaries of those funds from which the commercial world draws its largest supplies—they succeeded, by a policy at once bold and prudent, in fulfilling, to the satisfaction of all competent judges, the obligations of each branch of their duties. By judicious employment of that potent regulator, the rate of discount, they put a check, so far as it was possible by any measures of theirs to do so, on the expansion of commerce, and enforced that retrenchment of transactions which was necessary to meet the impending storm, while, at the same time, they earned this testimony from high authorities in the commercial world, that ‘every house in the crisis of 1857 which applied for and deserved assistance received it from the Bank of England.’¹ The position of the Bank in the last days of October and early part of November was indeed one which demanded the utmost sagacity and circumspection. The rate of discount had been raised, on the 19th October, to 8 per cent., the bullion being then 8,991,000*l.* and the banking reserve 4,115,000*l.* The rate of the Bank of France was then 7½ per cent., that of Hamburgh 9. About this time the negotiations took place for assistance to the Liverpool Borough Bank and the Western Bank of Scotland, which eventually failed, upon inquiry into the position of those concerns. Great uneasiness prevailed in London; and on the 28th October the Bank of England had an application from the principal discount house for an assurance that, if it was necessary, the Bank would give them any loans they might require. Other Scotch banks, at the same time, sent up to demand aid, and large amounts of coin had to be sent both to Scotland and

¹ Evidence, 1858. Ans. 1957.

Ireland. On the 5th November the bullion was reduced to 7,919,000*l.*, and the reserve to 2,944,000*l.* The rate of discount was then advanced to 9 per cent. Fresh applications for assistance poured in between the 5th and the 9th, both from London and the provinces. The Western Bank closed its doors, and Dennistoun's house failed with liability on acceptances to the extent of nearly two millions. The bullion and reserve of the Bank still declined, and the rate was raised on the 9th to 10 per cent. On the 10th, a leading discount house applied for 400,000*l.* Another English bank was assisted. The City of Glasgow Bank suspended payment. The discounts for that day at the Bank of England exhibited an increase of 1,126,000*l.* On that and the following day upwards of a million of sovereigns were sent to Scotland and more still were asked for. On the 11th, Sanderson and Co., the great bill-brokers, stopped payment: their liabilities were supposed to be 3,500,000*l.* On that day the discounts at the Bank of England were 1,143,000*l.*, their reserve was reduced the same evening to 1,462,000*l.*, and the bullion in the Issue Department to 6,666,000*l.* In fact, discounts had almost entirely ceased in London, except at the Bank of England.

The crisis had now reached its climax, and the greatest alarm and anxiety prevailed. The Bank of England, it was evident, had gone to the utmost length of its tether, and the accommodation it had hitherto so freely granted to commercial needs had reached its limits. Yet, although the supply was well-nigh exhausted, the demand had not ceased; and it was clear that, unless some new and extraordinary source of relief could be opened, one of two contingencies must take place—either the whole reserve of the Bank must be drained out, and its possible suspension of payments to its depositors be incurred, or else an inexorable denial must be given to all further applications, however pressing, from the commercial world; discounts and advances must absolutely cease, and sound and solvent houses be overwhelmed in one common ruin with the weak and overburdened firms which had already succumbed. But for some days prior to this extreme emergency the eye of the Government had been anxiously fixed upon the Bank, and frequent communications had passed between the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the governor, Mr. Sheffield Neave. It appears from this gentleman's evidence that the expectation of some intervention on the part of the executive had influenced the directors in the course they pursued for a day or two prior to the issue of the letter which dispensed with the limitations of the Act of Parliament. For

a brief time only, indeed, did this feeling operate, for events then moved with great rapidity, and a period of three days included the worst stage of the crisis, its climax, and its mitigation. On the evening of the 9th, in the opinion of Mr. Neave, the Bank was in a safe position, independent of any prospect of government intervention. On the 10th, while the stream of discounts and advances still flowed out freely, it does not appear that any idea of a relaxation of the law was present to the minds of the directors, though it seems by no means unlikely that the precedent of 1847 should have occurred to their recollection. But on the 11th, according to Mr. Neave's evidence, an intimation was confidentially given by the Government, which conveyed to his mind and those of his colleagues a moral assurance that, in the event of the Bank being placed in a position of difficulty by the continuance of its accommodation to the public, relief would be given by a suspension of the law. Acting on this impression, the directors fearlessly proceeded in the line that they had marked out for themselves—that of 'making common cause with commerce,' and assisting all those who needed and deserved assistance. Their discounts and advances, which on the day before had stood at 15,947,000*l.*, were increased by the operations of the 12th to 18,044,000*l.*; their reserve at the end of that day was brought down to 581,000*l.*, the bullion in the Issue Department being 6,524,000*l.* This was, of course, a position of banking affairs which could not, under ordinary circumstances, be justified; but according to the evidence of the directors it is one which certainly would not have been allowed to exist, except under an unequivocal assurance of indemnity from the Government. The indemnity, subject, of course, to parliamentary ratification, was given in nearly the same form as in 1847, by a letter from the Prime Minister to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, which was issued about three o'clock on the afternoon of the 12th. This act of authority solved the difficulty at once, so far as it consisted in a deficient supply of the circulating medium for the legitimate wants of commerce owing to the exhaustion of the Bank reserve. The losses and disasters that had actually occurred it was, of course, impossible to remedy. But so far as a further supply of money was the thing needed, the barrier was now removed, and there was no limit to the relief, the rate of 10 per cent. as the price of accommodation being the only restriction. But while the letter had an immediate effect in calming the public mind, and mitigating the extremity of the pressure, it did not at once operate to diminish the demand for discounts and advances. This continued to increase until the 21st November, on which

day the Bank had advanced in discounts the enormous sum of 21,600,000*l.*, a sum exceeding the whole amount of their deposits, both public and private. Half of these loans were made to bill-brokers, and were partly made on securities which, under other circumstances, the Bank would have been unwilling to accept. They were made for the purpose of sustaining commercial credit in a period of extreme pressure.¹

An important difference is to be observed with regard to the consequences that followed the issue of the Government letter between this crisis and the preceding one. In 1847 the mere license given to the Bank to exceed the legal limit of its circulation sufficed; the limit was, in fact, not exceeded. In that emergency there was more of the feature of panic, an apprehension, not founded on grounds of reason, that the circulation was deficient. When, therefore, the restriction was taken off this feeling at once subsided, the public were reassured as to the adequate supply of money, and the amount already in their hands proved sufficient. But in 1857, as the Governor of the Bank tells us, there was more commercial distress, but less of panic. On this point it will be as well to give Mr. Neave's own language—

90. 'In 1847 the issue of the letter was so effective that the limit was never exceeded?—The issue of the letter in 1847, I think, came just at the right moment, when the fever had reached its height, and it removed panic. I think that the commercial pressure had reached its climax.

91. 'Do you mean that the issue of the letter in 1857 was not at the proper moment?—It was at the proper moment, but there was more pressure yet behind it; the commercial pressure had not reached its height.

92. 'There was not the same panic, was there?—There was not the same panic in 1857 as there was in 1847; that is my impression.

93. 'And that I understand you to attribute to the conviction on the part of the public and of the Bank, that the Government would interfere, if necessary?—I think so; I think that it had its effect.'—Evidence, 1858.

In consequence of the continuing demand for discounts after the 12th November, the Bank directors, in pursuance of the authority given to them, transferred 2,000,000*l.* of notes from the issue department to the banking department, violating to that extent the Act of 1844. Not quite half this amount, indeed, was issued to the public, the maximum being 928,000*l.* on the 20th November. The residue of the two millions was added to the reserve of the Bank, and would of course have been available for the public if required. On the 30th November the excess of issue was only 15,000*l.*; after that day it ceased, and

¹ Evidence, 1858. Ans. 62.

the circulation once more conformed to the terms of the Act. The average of the excess of issue during the eighteen days of its continuance was 488,830*l*.

We do not share in the opinion of those who condemn the interference of the Government on this occasion, arguing that the law ought to have been maintained *coute qu'il coute*, and that if this had been done the difficulty would have cured itself, and the consequences would have fallen, not on the Bank, but on the trading world, to which, as these stern critics think, the catastrophe, however terrible, would have read a useful lesson. Doubtless the Bank could have saved itself: the Bank might have inexorably closed its doors to all applicants; and as the Bank was at that moment the only source of accommodation to borrowers, discounts and advances would have almost or altogether ceased, and the machinery of trade in the great metropolis of the world's commerce would have been brought to a dead stand. The consequences of such a climax can only be a matter of imagination. The wealthiest, the most substantial, the best-conducted houses, must have been reduced to the inability of meeting their engagements. A panic of the most formidable character would probably have set in: what turn it would have taken it is useless to conjecture, for who can forecast the insane hallucinations of panic? A run upon the banks by the depositors, a run by noteholders for gold, a desperate anxiety to hoard the already too inactive circulation, any wild and frantic movement that ignorance at such a time can generate out of fear might have resulted from the agony and confusion that would have seized the commercial world. And for what end? That the integrity of the law might be maintained?—a good object, no doubt, but even this may be purchased too dear. That the trading class might be taught a salutary moral?—a thing much to be desired; but it should be borne in mind that the rigid policy recommended would have fallen with equally fatal effect on the innocent and the guilty—on those who needed the lesson and on those who needed it not—on the trader whose engagements were a hundredfold in excess of his capital—and on the merchant whose property, if it could at such a time have been realised, would have far exceeded his liabilities. Unless credit, which, within proper limits, is the life-blood of trade, is to be proscribed altogether, the sudden and total paralysis of credit entails not only great calamity but great injustice.

It should be remembered, also, that the law, of which the suspension is now in question, was passed mainly for this end—to guarantee the Bank of England note, and with that view to limit the discretion of issuing notes by the bank directors. But

in the present instance the bank-note was beyond all risk of discredit, and the discretion of the directors was unimpeached. There was no tendency to that particular mischief which the provisions of the law were designed to guard against. It was, therefore, safe to relax those provisions for another and an adequate object. It is undesirable, certainly, that any law should be suspended by an arbitrary act of the executive. But a monetary panic is one of those evils which no law, however wise, can anticipate or prevent. Exceptional emergencies demand exceptional remedies. There are certain states of the public mind in which a prompt and even arbitrary exertion of authority may stay a plague which the collective wisdom of all the Acts in the statute-book would be powerless to arrest. Such an emergency existed at the time of which we are now speaking; and for the government at such a crisis to have stood aloof, to have taken its stand on the '*si fractus illabatur orbis*' principle, and refused to speak the word by which the phantom that possessed the public mind might be dispelled, would have been, in our opinion, to sacrifice the end to the means.

We have said that in the emergency just described the Bank of England note was perfectly safe from discredit. The bullion at its lowest point on the 12th November was not reduced below six millions and a half. This comfortable fact at least distinguished the crisis of 1857 from the commercial revulsions prior to the act of 1844. In 1837 the bullion in the issue department had sunk to 3,831,000*l.*; in 1839 it was 2,406,000*l.*; in 1825 it was 1,261,000*l.* Of the cause to which this very satisfactory feature in the Bank's position must be ascribed we shall have more to say presently. But the *value* of the fact is this, that in the most terrible ordeal to which, in the opinion of many competent witnesses, the commerce of this country has ever been subjected, under the severest shock to credit—the utmost anxiety to the monied world—not the slightest apprehension as to the security of the paper currency of the country ever crossed the most sensitive mind. The bank-note maintained its full identity in value with the gold it professed to represent, and the mass of the community who have no direct concern with the operations of commerce, but who use, as they are compelled to use, the circulating medium which the law of the country provides for them, were secured from all possibility of loss or anxiety on that account. In a word, to the distress and alarm of a commercial revulsion there was not superadded the still greater and more wide-spread confusion of a monetary panic. Now what was the real object of Sir Robert Peel's Bank Act of 1844? Even yet this does not seem to be a settled question. How can it be

decided? Shall we refer to the introductory speech of the author of the measure, as it stands reported in Hansard? If so the answer would seem to be unequivocal. But certain of the writers and speakers on the currency appear disinclined to adopt this test. They refer to the opinions and language of the *supporters* of the Act: in our opinion a vague and somewhat evasive appeal. As to the origin of the measure, indeed, there appears to have been one remarkable misapprehension in the public mind. Sir R. Peel, no doubt, was the ostensible author of the bill, but its merits or its demerits have been confidently fathered on another eminent person, a great pillar of the commercial world and a high authority on matters of finance. The assertion has been so often repeated that the uninitiated public had, we believe, generally accepted it as a received fact that the provisions of the law of 1844 were derived from the inspiration of Lord Overstone. The statement might very likely have passed as well authenticated, no doubt, as many other reputed facts, into the domain of history, but for the following unequivocal statement of the noble lord himself to the Committee of 1857, which, we suppose, even the most obstinate opponents of the law will accept as authoritative—

‘ I had no connexion, political or social, with Sir Robert Peel. I never exchanged one word upon the subject of this Act with Sir Robert Peel in my life, neither directly nor indirectly. I knew nothing whatever of the provisions of this Act until they were laid before the public; and I am happy to state that, because I believe that what little weight may attach to my unbiassed conviction of the high merits of this Act, and the service which it has rendered to the public, may be diminished by the impression that I have something of personal vanity in this matter. I have no feeling whatever of the kind. The Act is entirely, so far as I know, the Act of Sir Robert Peel, and the immortal gratitude of this country is due to him for the service rendered to it by the passing of that Act. He has never been properly appreciated, but year by year the character of that man upon this subject will be appreciated. By the Act of 1819, Sir Robert Peel placed the monetary system of this country upon an honest foundation, and he was exposed to great obloquy for having so done. By the Act of 1844 he has obtained ample and efficient security that that honest foundation of our monetary system shall be effectually and permanently maintained, and no inscription can be written upon his statue so honourable as that he restored our money to its just value in 1819, and secured for us the means of maintaining that just value in 1844. Honour be to his name!’—Evidence, 1857.

So much as to the authorship of the Act. But with regard to its object and design it will be much less easy to undeceive some persons whose deeply-rooted opinion of its failure involves the belief that it was intended to obviate some particular evils which, unquestionably, it has not prevented. It is of no use to reiterate to them what Sir Robert Peel distinctly declared, viz.,

that the object of his legislation was not to prevent speculative manias, or the panic and distress which are their natural results, but only to prevent the currency of the country being involved in discredit by the effect of such revulsions. But in stating this we are wasting words upon the deaf, and upon that class of them whom it is proverbially most difficult to make hear. A member of parliament, for whose probity and intelligence on many subjects we feel sincere respect, but who, on currency questions, is beyond the reach of argument or evidence, thus exhibits his profound conception of the principles of our currency laws. Mr. Coleman is the witness; Mr. Cardwell in the chair.

2104. *Mr. Spooner.*] 'Did you ever, in the course of your practice, know such wild trading, and what is called over-speculation, as has been developed by the last failures?—Never; there never could have been such by any possibility.

2105. 'Then any Act which was passed in order to prevent this over-trading has completely failed in its object?—I am not aware that there is any Act of the kind.

2106. 'Are you aware at all of the Act of 1844?—I answered before that I was not intimately acquainted with the Act.

2107. 'Then you are not aware that one of the main grounds of necessity upon which that Act was passed was to prevent those wild speculations?—No, I am not.

2108. *Chairman.*] 'If anybody was so foolish as to predict that that Act would alter the current of human nature, and prevent the disasters which result from sanguine speculation, you are not acquainted with the fact?—I am not.'

So long as human nature remains as it is, fluctuations in trade will occur, and the reaction of pressure must, by a natural law, succeed to the inflation of credit. The commercial body must bear the burthen of their own imprudence. Such penalties are necessary, and they are just; but there is no necessity for, and no justice in punishing the whole community for the rashness and cupidity of a particular class, by confiscating a portion of their property. Depreciation of the circulating medium of a country is confiscation. The law prescribes the use of a certain medium of exchange—be it in metal, or paper, or a mixture of both—by the transfer of which the common business of life is carried on. Every member of the community must adopt this medium: he has no alternative. He must take it in payment of his debts: he must accept it in exchange for his property. To maintain the value of this medium, according to a known and fixed standard, is one of the first duties of the state: to depreciate it wilfully for their own gain is one of the base frauds to which despotic governments have occasionally resorted: to suffer it to be depreciated, not wilfully, but by error of judgment, through the laxity of the law, by privileges given to

individuals and abused to the public injury—this, indeed, though a far less crime than the deliberate confiscation before spoken of, is an enormous evil, which ought to be guarded against by the most stringent legislative securities.

Now it was to provide such a security—most imperfectly supplied before—in other words, to guarantee the convertibility of the Bank of England note, that Sir R. Peel's statute was devised. The law had said that the Bank of England note, the paper promise of a chartered company, should form part of the currency of the country—should be paid as money and received as money—on an equal footing with the pieces of gold and silver, which bear an intrinsic value all the world over. The value which the law thus ascribes to the authorised note the law is bound, on every principle of justice, to insure to it. To falsify this assertion, or to suffer it to be falsified by others, is to perpetrate or permit a fraud upon every person into whose hands the medium of exchange may fall. Paper money, one of the first conveniences of modern civilisation, becomes one of the greatest banes and curses to society unless so regulated as to be always convertible into the precious metals which it represents. Nor must the convertibility rest only upon a profession or declaration of law. It must be convertible *de facto*, and the certainty of its conversion secured on as firm a basis as if the conventional value with which it is stamped were as much an actuality as that of the precious metals themselves.

It seems strange, that principles so self-evident as these should be questioned or undervalued; but the evidence given to the Committee shows that they are to a wide extent misunderstood, or unappreciated. Of the commercial men who were examined, a large proportion take a purely commercial view of the subject. Unacquainted, for the most part, with the scientific laws of the currency, their one idea of a Bank Act is, that it should be so framed as to insure at all times an ample accommodation of loanable capital to the commercial world. If money is 'tight,' it is the fault of the law which contracts the circulating medium; the remedy they would have is 'more notes.' They ask this in the face of the fact, that bullion is flowing out of the country, though common sense might teach them that when the gold is decreased, the notes which represent the gold should decrease also, lest it should happen that there is not enough gold to answer for the notes. As a specimen, we take the following passage from the evidence of Mr. John Smith, who has been for many years a banker at Leeds, and was deputed by the Chamber of Commerce at that town to give evidence before the Committee.

5734. *Chairman.*] 'Do you think that the issue of a treasury letter, authorising the Bank of England to issue more paper when the bullion in the Bank is reduced to 1,260,000*l.* would increase confidence, or would it increase apprehension and alarm?—I think it would increase confidence, because people would have a knowledge that they could get money at some price or other.

5735. 'Do you think that the convertibility of the note at the Bank of England itself would be a matter of anxiety in Leeds under those circumstances?—I do not think that the convertibility of the note is a question which ever enters into people's minds.

5738. 'Do not you think that much comfort was derived by the people of Leeds in the autumn of 1857, from knowing that there was so large an amount of bullion at the Bank, that no apprehension whatever existed with regard to the convertibility of the note?—The people of Leeds, of course, derived comfort, simply from the letter being issued; they did not consider the question of the bullion at all, I think.

5739. 'You have told us that they entertained no apprehension with regard to the convertibility of the note?—Just so; although, of course, they are perfectly well aware, as we all are, that after the exhaustion of the notes to the 14,000,000*l.*, there is no more convertibility.

5740. 'Do you think that if they had known that the bullion had fallen, as it fell in 1825 to 1,260,000*l.*, they would have enjoyed the same immunity from thought about the convertibility of the note, which they actually did in November last?—*I do not think they would have thought anything at all about it. I think that the question of the convertibility of the note never entered their minds. All they look to is the way of getting money to meet their current obligations.*

5741. 'Suppose it came to be known at Leeds that there was no more gold at the Bank, and that when a person took a bank-note there, there was nothing to give in exchange for it?—They would pay it away.

5742. 'You think that they would be altogether regardless about it?—Yes; they would pay the note from hand to hand.

5743. *Mr. G. C. Glyn.*] 'A merchant and manufacturer thinks much more about getting his bills discounted than about the convertibility of the note, does he not?—Yes; it never enters into his mind.

5744. *Chairman.*] 'Do you mean to represent to the Committee on the part of the inhabitants of Leeds, that the convertibility of the Bank of England note is to them a matter of no importance, and no consideration?—*The class of people who are manufacturera, and others, do not enter into these minute questions; they look simply to the mode of getting money to meet their obligations.*'

The town of Birmingham has hitherto enjoyed an unenviable reputation for the doctrines of currency professed there; but it may be questioned whether the complacent ignorance of Leeds indicates a more hopeful state of the public mind, as regards the principles of political economy, than the fantastic perversity of Birmingham.

But we are bound to admit that it is not the provinces only that are benighted on these topics. We have not anywhere met with a more singular conception of the very term 'convertibility,' than in the evidence of a gentleman, who is described to us by Mr. Cayley as 'a sagacious London banker, of fifty years'

experience.' It is on the evidence of this gentleman that Mr. Cayley mainly relies in support of the new scheme of currency recommended in his own draft report, in which the very passage we are about to extract is quoted with approbation. Mr. Twells is questioned as follows—

4655. *Mr. Cayley.*] 'You have been asked how you determine the value of a 5*l.* note; how do you determine the value of a sovereign?—I determine it by what it will produce to me, and I always find that a bank-note will produce quite as much as a sovereign. Some subtile questions may arise upon it; but I never found any difficulty in practice in converting a 5*l.* note into anything that I wanted.

4656. 'What do all these different variations in the rate of discount mean; in your opinion do not they mean changes in the value of the sovereign?—All of them must affect the value of the sovereign, the same as anything else.

4657. 'Then the present system does not exempt you from variations in the legal tender?—Not at all.

4658. 'Your belief is that the 20,000,000*l.* of legal tender paper, from not being removable by export to other countries, would give you a more uniform value of the legal tender than you now possess?—More uniform and more steady, a great deal.

4659. 'And that is your reason for suggesting it in preference to one which produces such great oscillations?—Yes.

4660. 'What is the object of convertibility, in your opinion?—*The object of convertibility, I conceive, is to get possession of any one thing which I can possibly require, whether it is gold, or a horse, or broad cloth, or anything; and I find that a note is as easily convertible, and I conceive that it always will be as convertible, as long as it has the sanction of a stable Government.*

Mr. Cayley himself appears to have been not quite satisfied (and we are little surprised at it) as to the accuracy of the last answer, and he endeavours to suggest a somewhat amended definition to the witness, but with indifferent success.

4661. 'Do you not believe that the object of convertibility is, that if you part with any property for the legal tender, that legal tender shall furnish you with as much property in return as you part with?—Quite; it is merely the medium of exchange.'

We have no wish to speak disrespectfully of Mr. Twells; but really it was unfair, both to the witness and to the Committee, to put forward a gentleman, who professes to found his opinions merely on 'experience,'¹ whose mind has evidently never approached the principles of the subject, and whose notions are those of the purest empiricism, as an authority to guide a parliamentary inquiry on the doctrines of the currency.

A question put to another of the witnesses, Mr. Robert Slater, by Mr. Cayley, indicates pretty well the sort of loose and con-

¹ See his answers 4709-4758.

fused notions prevalent in some minds, which have never penetrated below the surface of the subject.

Mr. Cayley asks (2411)—‘In legislating upon these subjects, do you think that we ought first to consider the laws of money or that we ought first to consider the interests of trade?’ To which the witness, a member of a large commercial firm, promptly answers: ‘I think the interests of trade ought to be first considered: the safety of the community.’ The question and answer thus assume that currency and commerce are antagonistic interests, and that, with a view to ‘the safety of the community,’ the regulation of the monetary system of the country may be inconsistent with, or is, at all events, a secondary object to, the interests of trade. A strange doctrine, surely, to be propounded in the middle of the nineteenth century, in a country which professes to acknowledge the principles of Adam Smith! As if a soundly-regulated monetary system were not a first necessity for ‘the safety of the community;’ as if trade itself could be carried on with any confidence or security unless the medium of exchange which it deals with day by day were guarded, so far as laws can do so, from fluctuation or discredit. We are not now upholding the merits of this or that particular system of currency. But to say, in the abstract, that the law should first take thought for the interests of trade, and, having secured that, should then apply its attention to the regulation of money, and this for ‘the safety of the community,’ is very like saying that we ought, in the first instance, to consider the interests of the corn-dealers and the farmers, and then take thought for the means of supplying the community with bread.

But a far greater oracle than these witnesses of the commercial class—men of high respectability in their several callings, no doubt, but professing to be no more than ‘practical men,’ deriving their conclusions, not from study of principles, but from mere empirical knowledge, and therefore incompetent (we say it without disrespect) to be the guides of monetary legislation—a very different authority from any of these persons has enunciated opinions, with respect to the point now under discussion, to which we are compelled to except. Mr. John Stuart Mill was examined by the Committee of 1857 as a witness on the Bank Act. His opinion is in many points unfavourable to that measure. We cordially acknowledge Mr. Mill’s title to public deference and respect. His economical writings, though in our judgment occasionally impeachable in point of soundness, are characterised by high ability and extensive knowledge. But if there is any department of his valuable work, on the ‘Principles of Political Economy’ of

which we should be inclined to say '*quandoque dormitat*,' it is the chapters on the currency. Not that his views, even when they appear erroneous, are not always interesting and worthy of regard, but that, alike in these passages of his work and the evidence given by him to Parliament in reference to the banking laws, there appears to us to be some influence which warps his mind and disturbs the equilibrium of his judgment. One of these aberrations from his wonted sagacity is evinced, we think, in the opinion which this eminent economist delivered to the Committee—that one of the errors of the Bank Act is the undue regard which it evinces for the convertibility of the bank-note, as compared with the security of the depositors.

2287. 'The convertibility of the note would, in your opinion, be as safe without the Act of 1844 as with it?—Yes; while at the same time a much greater evil than the inconvertibility of the note, namely, suspension of payments by the banking department, is much more possible with the Act than it was before.'—Evidence, 1857.

We demur to this position, on the double ground of fact and principle. First, we say that the security of those who intrust their money to the custody of the Bank of England as their bankers, is, in point of fact, a far better security than the noteholder would, but for the provisions of the Act, enjoy. Secondly, we say that the security of the noteholder—*i. e.* of the public—*ought* in principle to be a much greater object of public concern, and more effectually provided for—if there were any question of comparative risk—than the security of the depositor. As to the contingency of the Bank's insolvency to its depositors it is a chimera. We do not say that a temporary suspension in an extreme crisis is an *impossible* event; but the solvency of the banking department is not, nor ever has been, in any doubt. Every one knows that the Bank has ample means to meet its deposits. In addition to the securities held for the time in its banking department, and the three millions and upwards of 'rest,' the depositors are further secured by the proprietors' capital of 14½ millions. On the 11th of Nov. 1857, the very day before the government letter was issued, the position of the banking department as regards its assets and its liabilities was as follows—

Banking Department.

Public deposits . £ 5,314,659	Reserve of notes . . £ 957,710
Private deposits . . 12,935,344	Reserve of coin 504,443
	Government securities 9,444,828
	Other securities . . 26,113,453

The popular proverb, 'As safe as the Bank,' is not founded,

so far as the security of the depositors is concerned, on light grounds.¹

But now as to the relative claims to security of the two classes of creditors. What is a depositor? He is a person who, for his own convenience, and in the free exercise of his own judgment, intrusts his money to the Bank. He selects it in preference to other banking-houses. Whatever the risk may be, with open eyes he accepts that risk. It is a contract—a private stipulation—between the parties. If he should think that the Act of 1844, or any other Act, impairs the safety of his deposit, he has only to transfer his money elsewhere. But, on the other hand, who are the noteholders? They are the great body of the nation—every man, rich or poor, knowing or ignorant—into whose hands the paper notes of the Bank of England come. *Nolens volens* he is obliged to take them, for they are by law a legal tender—a valid payment of debts. He cannot refuse the note and demand sovereigns. And is not the claim of the noteholder, therefore, unanswerable in point of equity, that if the law compels him to accept notes as gold, the law shall maintain those notes at the full gold value, and, as a pledge thereof, be ready to give gold for them whenever demanded? This is no matter of voluntary contract, the noteholder has no option. The State says to him, ‘You shall take these notes:’ he is entitled to say to the State, ‘Then you shall guarantee to me their convertibility.’ The following passage from the evidence of Mr. G. Hubbard, an ex-governor of the Bank, well sustains our argument, and, as the witness justly points out, the principle virtually applies to country notes, no less than to Bank of England notes, although the former are not a legal tender.

2808. ‘Do you conceive that the noteholder ought to have security when the depositors, forming so much larger a proportion of the creditors of the bank, should be left without security?—*I do; I conceive that the noteholder ought to be exposed to no risk whatever; I conceive that the depositor must, in the nature of things, be exposed to risk, and he may fairly be left to take the risk upon himself, because the action under which he incurs that liability is one of his own free choice. The very circumstance to which you have adverted, of the greater magnitude of the deposits over the note circulation, brings at once to one’s notice that the persons concerned in the deposits are people of larger property and greater intelligence, and therefore more fit to protect themselves in their operations with the bank than the noteholders.*

2809. ‘Do you think that the noteholder is not as voluntary a creditor as the depositor?—*I believe the noteholder is an involuntary creditor of*

¹ See, on this part of the subject, an able paper by Mr. J. Freshfield, inserted in the Appendix to the Blue Book, p. 428.

the bank practically in the ordinary circulation of country notes. Any person in the district through which they circulate takes, as a matter of habit and matter of necessity, a note presented to him, although he is often ignorant of the position of the bank, and he cannot very well make inquiries respecting it, supposing he has doubts, but the probability is, that doubts do not enter his mind, and he takes it upon general trust.

2810. 'Then if no doubt enters his mind he is a voluntary creditor?—He is voluntary inasmuch as this, that if he were to refuse to sell his commodities, he might not have a necessity for taking the note; but a man can hardly in a provincial district refuse to sell except for Bank of England notes. You must take the notes circulating in the district if you sell at all.

2811. 'When he has got the note, do you not allow that where the circulation is a very limited one, he has the means of presenting that note the next day for payment?—But the very necessity of having to go to a country town to present the note would be to him an insuperable impediment; it would be exposing him to an additional labour, which in the matter of circulation of money ought not to exist. I hold that there ought to be no more risk of loss in holding a 5*l.* note than in holding five sovereigns.'

We hold the opinion of this well-informed witness to be entirely sound. The right of the public is prior to that of the customers of the bank. The noteholder is entitled to 'perfect security.'

Upon the essential distinction which we have endeavoured to enforce rests that separation of the functions of the Bank of England, which the Act of 1844 established, by dividing the banking department from the department of issue. This arrangement asserts a principle which is the keystone of the Act. As such, it has of course been warmly assailed by those who are opposed to the theory of the measure. Yet it is a principle, which, as it appears to us, requires, in order to its recognition, only to be distinctly apprehended. The principle is this: Two operations, heretofore discharged by the Bank of England, are in their nature perfectly distinct. One is the business of a bank of deposit and discount. To receive the money of individuals—to employ at a profit so much of that money as is not required for the current wants of the depositors—is the business of a banker. It is a trade founded upon private contract—it is one to which the principle of free trade properly applies. The other function is that of authenticating and issuing the circulating medium of the country. The coinage of the precious metals into money has always been deemed to be one of the sovereign prerogatives of government. The creation of paper money, rightly considered, stands on the same footing as the coinage of metallic money. For all paper money, unless it be a delusion and fraud, is, in fact, only the token or representative of the precious metal, for which it is a convenient substitute. The idea of throwing open

the manufacture of paper money to competition is a palpable absurdity. If, then, the coinage of money be a privilege which pertains to the State, as representing the community, the issue of paper currency belongs exclusively to the same authority—to the State itself, or to those only to whom the State may think fit to delegate it. If so delegated, it is the bounden duty of the State, by the most careful regulations, to protect from abuse the powers so confided; and, since the issue of paper is gainful to the issuer in proportion to its quantity, especially to provide that it be not issued in such excess that the note should become no longer the veritable representative of the value it imports. If the note which professes to stand for coin should ever cease to be as good as the coin itself, the State has betrayed its duty as the authoritative source and guardian of the circulating medium.

Previously to the Act of 1844, the Bank of England was two things under one name. It was a banking corporation, exactly resembling, except in its greater magnitude and influence, the London Joint-Stock, or the London and Westminster Bank. It was, at the same time, the organ employed by government to create and issue paper money, declared by the law of the land to be of equal value and efficacy for all transactions with the coin of the realm. There might be conveniences, or there might be disadvantages in permitting these two distinct characters and functions to be united in one corporation. But if convenience required the combination, at all events it was reasonable and right that the exercise of the two functions should be separated by that line which no arbitrary rule or theory but the essential nature of things marked out between them; above all, that, in the books of the Bank there should not be a confounding together under one head of banking accounts and currency liabilities—of the funds kept to meet the demands of the depositors and of the store of metal reserved as a security to the holders of the notes. Proceeding on these views, the Act separated off the banking department from the department of issue; and it required separate and distinct accounts to be kept and published of the resources and liabilities of each department. The customer of the Bank now knows what he has to look to—the reserve in the banking-till: the holders of the notes—the general public—understand what is their guarantee of value—the bullion stored in the vaults on the issue side.

That an arrangement so natural, just, and strictly logical, as this division of departments should be the object of cavil, and should be represented as ‘weakening the position’ of the Bank, and disabling her from lending the aid which she ought to give

to commerce, may well be deemed surprising; but that such objections should be indorsed by so weighty a name as that of Mr. Mill is still more remarkable. Mr. Mill has committed his high authority to the opinion, that in case of a drain, on account of unusual foreign payments, 'it is desirable that the Bank should be able to replenish the reserve of its banking department from its issue department.'¹ In the following answer (2102), his meaning is more fully explained—

'Whenever there is a drain, this drain operates in the first place on the reserve in the banking department. As long as the banking department and the issue department were one, the whole reserve of the Bank was available to meet these demands on its deposits; and so it would still be, notwithstanding the separation of the departments as a matter of account, if in an extremity the issue department was allowed to come to the assistance of the banking department; because in that case, supposing, for example, that 3,000,000*l.* were drawn out of the reserve of the deposit department, the Bank, instead of selling securities, or contracting its discounts in order to replenish its reserve, would simply transfer the necessary number of millions from the issue department, either in notes or in gold, to the reserve of the banking department; not for the purpose of lending it to the public, but simply to meet the demands of its depositors if they should continue to draw their deposits out. In that case, therefore, the Bank would not be obliged to take immediate means for contracting its credit in order to replenish its reserve; but now it must. *The Bank is now exactly in the position, with regard to the solvency of its banking department, that it would be in if the issue department were annihilated altogether.* The Bank is obliged to depend for the solvency of its banking department upon what it can do to replenish the reserve in that department; and therefore as soon as it finds that there is any drain in progress, it is obliged to look to the safety of its reserve, and to commence contracting its discounts, or selling securities.'

The words which we have printed in italics appear, in Mr. Mill's judgment, to constitute an impeachment against the Act of 1844. That which he intends as an inculpation, we regard as one of the chief merits of that Act. The banking department is separated from the issue department as effectually as if the latter did not exist. Granted:—it was intended so to be, it is the very principle of the law that it should be so—that distinct functions, distinct engagements, distinct rights should be so discriminated. It is in accordance with the natural equity of the case, and with the specific contract of the parties concerned. For what claim can the depositor pretend to make to the bullion in the other department of the Bank of England? '*Non hæc in fœdera venit.*' If the Bank of England had never been, or if it should to-morrow cease to be, a bank of issue, would it at all affect his position or his right as a depositor?

¹ Evidence, 1857. Ans. 2105.

Certainly not. Or, should the banking department be so mismanaged as to imperil his deposits, would he have any ground of equitable claim to be recouped his loss out of the stakes which the Bank holds on behalf of the noteholder? The assertion is preposterous. Again, it is represented by Mr. Mill and others, as something cruel and monstrous, that at a time of severe pressure, when the commercial world is besieging the Bank for aid, and the Bank is obliged to impose severe restrictions on its accommodation—at that very moment a large mass of bullion lies locked up and unemployed in the issue vaults. True again—the convertibility of the note is thus protected; but it is forgotten that this gold, though physically locked up, is not inoperative on the circulation. Every ounce of it is represented at that very moment by notes, which, under the provisions of the law, have been issued upon the basis of it, and are actually outstanding in the hands of the public, or in the reserve of the banking department.

If the distinction which we have laboured to enforce between banking business and money-issuing be not a mere fanciful subtlety, but one founded in reason and fact, we can conceive nothing more untenable, more fallacious, or unscientific, than the proposition with which we have just been dealing—that the liabilities and resources of the Bank, in respect to its deposits and its notes, should be once more made promiscuous, and thrown into what the lawyers would call ‘hotch-pot’ together. No doubt among currency theorists the ‘hotch-pot’ school are a numerous body, but we are greatly deceived if their theories are now in the ascendant. If we can contemplate any change at all as likely to take place in our monetary legislation, we feel confident that the step will be made in precisely the opposite direction. The development of opinion and experience may possibly lead, in course of time, to the constitution of a separate department, as a branch of the Executive, analogous to the Mint, for the issuing of paper currency, and consequently to the restriction of the Bank of England to its banking function. But that the legislature should retrace its steps, and, ignoring the sound principles of monetary science as now established on the firmest basis, both by speculation and experience, should amalgamate and confound together the two alien functions of money dealing and money-issuing—should put an end to the separation of departments, and resort to the former promiscuous system of accounts, appears to us to be about as probable an event as the re-enactment of the Heptarchy.

From a further discussion of the topics suggested by the evidence, our limits compel us unwillingly to desist. There are

several points on which it would have been otherwise satisfactory to enlarge. We should have liked to expose the fallacy of the allegation made by some persons, that the Act of 1844 has been the cause of greater and more frequent variations in the value of money than took place previously to its enactment, and of the recommendation—scarcely deserving, however, of serious comment—that the Bank should adopt a fixed minimum rate of discount. We should have been tempted, also, to sift to the bottom what Lord Overstone justly terms that ‘random assertion so often thrown out without any support of reasoning or of facts,’ that it is to the gold-findings of Australia, and not to the provisions of the currency laws, that the maintenance of an adequate store of bullion, both in 1847 and in 1857, is to be attributed. We are debarred, by the same cause, from the criticism we had intended to offer on the draft report proposed to the Committee by Mr. Cayley—a singular farrago of crude notions and misapplied erudition—and on the new-fangled system of currency propounded by that gentleman, of which it is perhaps the least disrespectful thing to say that to our minds it is utterly incomprehensible. Having been obliged to tax rather severely the patience of our readers, we should have been glad also to enliven our dry pages with some diverting specimens of the fantastic crotchets in which currency theorists, perhaps beyond any other class of lunatics at large, are prone to indulge. Nor would it have been unamusing to contemplate, as portrayed in the evidence before us, the convulsive struggles and plunges of ‘practical men’ out of their depth, when egged on by the grave irony, or pressed by the searching questions of such interrogators as Mr. Cardwell.

As to those points of the controversy which we are obliged to leave for the present untouched, we must content ourselves with referring our readers—in full confidence that their study will be well repaid—to certain portions of the evidence laid before Parliament in 1857. There will be found the sound and weighty testimony of men who, like some of the present bank directors, are not only thoroughly versed in the practical details of the business in which they pass their lives, but have also studied with deep attention the scientific principles of the currency, and in some instances made valuable additions to the literature of the subject. Among such authorities it will not be deemed invidious to particularise the enlightened intelligence of Mr. Hubbard and Mr. Weguelin, or the mature experience and penetrating sagacity of Mr. Norman. But there is another witness of still greater mark, whose evidence before the Committee we cannot be content to pass by without a more special

tribute of commendation. The examination of Lord Overstone occupied three entire days, and fills more than sixty folio pages of the Blue Book. Considered with reference to the nature of the subject, and the tribunal before which it was given, this evidence appears to us to be a remarkable feat of intellectual power. If any one thinks it a light matter to pass through such an ordeal without failure or miscarriage, we would say, as was said to one who conceived it a very easy thing to write good leading articles, 'Let him try it.' A Parliamentary Committee is, in fact, a very peculiar sort of inquisition. Composed of some fifteen or twenty members selected to represent different views and classes of opinion, it presents great odds against any witness who comes before it as the exponent of a particular theory or doctrine. But the mode in which the examination is allowed to be conducted multiplies the difficulty. No restrictions such as are enforced in the courts of law exist as to the form or character of the interrogatories. Leading questions—long rambling statements, with a note of interrogation at the end—questions that assume the point in dispute, or, worse still, involve apocryphal facts or inaccurate figures, are thrust upon the examinee, first from one quarter of the committee-room, then from another; and it requires no ordinary tact and self-possession in a witness to avoid being beguiled into inconsiderate admissions, and firmly to hold his own against the assaults, direct and indirect, to which he is exposed. Amidst such difficulties Lord Overstone, strong in his perfect mastery and comprehension of the subject, held his undeviating course, excepting to entangling questions, dissecting fallacies, exposing ever and anon the blunders of his interrogators, and asserting his own positions with a clearness of thought and preciseness of expression scarcely to be surpassed even in a prepared composition. His evidence in these respects forms an admirable study, and notwithstanding the somewhat desultory form which, through no fault of the witness, it was made to assume, it will remain, we have no doubt, a lasting monument of his high ability, and will be referred to hereafter as a leading authority on monetary subjects. It would be well indeed if the self-styled 'practical men,' who pride themselves on their familiarity with business, and affect to sneer at 'theorists,' would ponder the opinions and study the reasonings of one who, with an unusual extent of varied knowledge and experience, combines that power of analysis and firm grasp of principles which are the distinctive attainment of the well-trained speculative intellect.

One word in conclusion as to the results of this inquiry. The first and most obvious effect to our minds is, that it will confirm

the Act of 1844. The weightiest and most convincing portion of the evidence, as well as the manifest tendency of the Report, support this view. It appears also, from several indications in the evidence, that by the well-informed part of the mercantile community the Act is becoming better understood and more justly appreciated. What is more, the soundest heads in Parliament, without reference to party, have given in their adhesion to it. We venture to predict, therefore, that, so far as regards its main principles, the Act will stand. Whether any modification may not be hereafter made in its subsidiary provisions, we are not so confident. The present Committee, after hearing many propositions of change, have not decided to recommend any. One of the questions, on which much inquiry was expended, was as to the expediency of making an addition of two millions to the amount of notes now issuable by the Bank of England on securities. The Committee decided rightly, we think, in the negative. They were satisfied that the effect of such a measure would be, not to increase absolutely the amount of notes in public circulation, but merely, as explained by Mr. Weguelin and other witnesses, to cause two millions of that amount which now rests upon bullion to rest upon securities, to weaken to that extent the resources of the bullion department, and make it less secure against such drains as those of 1847 and 1857. At such junctures the Committee consider that the public confidence will be better fortified, and the possibility of risk more surely averted, by keeping up a reserve of eight millions of precious metal than of six. The question of retaining the present note issues of the provincial banks, and the one-pound note circulation of Scotland and Ireland was also much ventilated. In the abstract, no doubt the principles of our present currency system are adverse to these exceptional privileges; but the deference paid by Sir Robert Peel to existing arrangements and cherished interests was likewise felt by the Committee, and it appeared to them that, *rebus sic stantibus*, it was expedient to refrain from innovations calculated to unsettle the public mind, and to provoke opposition or resentment. A still more important topic of discussion, deserving of grave consideration, arose as to the expediency of making prospective provision, supposing the necessity to arise, for a future suspension of the Act. Should this be done, as on the two former occasions, by an ultra-legal exercise of authority on the part of the Executive, or should the exercise of the power be defined beforehand, and regulated by statute? It is a difficult question, and one which ought not to be blinked. It is idle to deny that a law twice set aside by a dispensing power loses no

small portion of its moral force, and none could survive indefinite repetitions of such a process. On the other hand, we are met by the extreme difficulty of anticipating the occasions and defining the multiform conditions of those abnormal states of the commercial and monetary world, which may justify or require a departure from fixed principles. To medicate successfully to such extremities, the physician should stand with his hand on the pulse, and his eye fixed on the varying symptoms of the patient; and the time and mode of his intervention should be guided by an immediate discretion which no law-maker can prescribe nor statutory directions regulate. Impressed, doubtless, with such difficulties, the Committee have thought it best to leave future emergencies to be dealt with as the necessities of the occasion may dictate.

The question naturally arises, upon reading these records of disaster, How long may it be before we shall see another speculative mania—another commercial crisis? Do these expansions and collapses of trade come round in a regular cycle? do they obey, as some may be almost led to think, a law of decennial recurrence? May the almanack-makers safely announce this prediction for October, 1867, 'Expect heavy failures about this time?' We must decline the responsibility of prophecy on such a subject. One thing is clear—such events are beyond the control of legislation. The derangements of commerce are, in the great majority of cases, caused by excess of speculation, and the gambling propensity is deeply seated in human nature. Whether the 'progress of knowledge,' or the repeated scourges of that stern schoolmaster, experience, will at last avail to stay the plague of which the periodical visitations have been so ruinous, we dare not venture to predict. But the remedy cannot come from the statute-book. One thing, however, the law can and may do, and this duty, we trust, it will firmly and faithfully perform. Whatever becomes of speculators and money-dealers, whatever the consequences of over-trading and 'open credits,' we demand protection for those classes—in fact, the great body of the nation—who are not mixed up with the operations of trade, but who necessarily employ and confide in that medium of exchange without which the ordinary transactions of life cannot be carried on. To them the faith of the State is solemnly pledged to preserve, not only from variation, but from the suspicion of mutability, the standard of value. From the fraud of spurious metallic coin the law does protect them by stringent penalties; it is bound to provide them with an equal safeguard against the no less baneful imposture of discredited or depreciated paper-money.

V.

THE PROSPECTS OF ART IN ENGLAND.

1. *Directory of the Science and Art Department of the Committee of Council on Education, South Kensington, with Regulations for establishing and conducting Schools of Art, and promoting General Art Education.* London: The Queen's Printers.
2. *Companion to the British Almanac for 1859.* London: Knight.
3. *On Colour and Taste.* By Sir J. Gardner Wilkinson. London: Murray.
4. *Handbook of Architecture.* By James Fergusson, M.R.I.B.A. Second Edition. London: Murray, 1859.
5. *On Gothic Architecture, Secular and Domestic.* By G. G. Scott, A.R.A. Second Edition. London: Murray, 1859.
6. *Report from the Select Committee on Foreign-Office Reconstruction.* Ordered by the House of Commons to be printed. 1858.
7. *The Common Sense of Art.* A Lecture delivered at the Architectural Museum, by A. J. B. Beresford Hope, M.P. London: Murray, 1858.
8. *Publications (for the year 1856) of the Arundel Society for Promoting the Knowledge of Art.* London: 1858.
9. *Memoir of Thomas Uwins, R.A.* London: Longmans, 1858.
10. *Memoir of Thomas Seddon, Artist.* London: Nisbet, 1858.
11. *Ruskin's Address at the Opening of the Cambridge School of Art.*
12. *Westlake's Illustrated Old Testament History.* By an English Artist about A.D. 1310. London: Masters.
13. *Painting Popularly Explained.* By T. J. Gullick and John Timbs, F.S.A. London: Kent & Co., 1859.

[T is easier to follow the course, and to trace out the consequences, of the several conspicuous revivals of arts or letters which are recorded in the annals of civilisation than it is to account satisfactorily for their origin or to explain their phenomena. The periods of greatest intellectual activity have not uniformly recurred under similar conditions of political, religious, or social life; and it has as yet defied the inductive powers of the philosophical student of history to determine the law, if any, which regulates their cycles. Art, for instance, has thriven equally in the free atmosphere of republican Athens and under the close and stifling oligarchy of the Italian municipalities; amidst

the fresh bursts of the new life of Teutonic Christianity and under the decrepit despotism of the Medicean or Borgian Popedom. Literature, again, has flourished under the most dissimilar outward circumstances. Shakspeare and Milton needed no Mæcenæ, and the mild patronage of Weimar was wholly wanting in the Florence of Dante and Boccaccio. How little, again, was there in common between the times of our own great Elizabethan and so-called Augustan writers! And, remembering Tacitus and Tiberius, we will not yet believe, in spite of appearances, that even an imperial tyranny can wholly quench the flame of genius in a great people. Nor, again, have the most important historical developments of science, art, and literature been strictly parallel or contemporaneous. At first sight it would seem probable that all the chief branches of human study would flourish simultaneously in an age of great intellectual progress. But the theory is not borne out by facts. Music, for example, did not reach the culminating point of its mediæval stage under Palestrina till its sister arts had long passed their maturity and entered upon their decline. But then, again, it was music that, under Mozart and Beethoven, anticipated that modern revival which, in its special relation to architecture, painting, and sculpture, it is our present purpose to examine. Past experience, therefore, would not justify any very confident prediction with respect to the future of that remarkable renaissance of the fine arts which has been witnessed by the present generation. We may observe its facts, study its tendencies, and record its progress; but as we cannot with any certainty trace these events to their final causes, so neither can we prophecy their ultimate results. Still we may profitably speculate on the future; and we may even affect the future very materially by directing the course of the stream as it flows on.

There are some who have attempted to prove that we owe to the romantic mediævalism of the writings of Sir Walter Scott the modern reaction in matters of taste which is characteristic of the art of our day. But deeper reflection would show that the great novelist was not so much the originator and prophet of a new faith as an exponent of a general movement which was beginning in his time to stir the whole European mind. Fouqué in Germany, and Victor Hugo in France, represent the same principle. It is seldom otherwise than futile to attempt to trace to any one man, or to any one place, the first impulses of those great tides of opinion which from time to time have ebbed and flowed among mankind. There are generally deeper and more mysterious energies in operation to produce such mighty results than the will of any individual, however gifted. Such an one is

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himself an agent, not the prime mover. He represents rather than originates. Many a thinker has thrown out hints which, if taken up, would have revolutionised the world; but, so long as the seed sown fell on ground that was not prepared, it took no root. Such men are familiarly described as being before their age. All great changes of opinion are the growth of years and the result of numberless co-operative and converging forces. When the time has come, and men's minds are ripe for it, the new sentiment shows its universality by manifesting itself in a thousand forms and places at once. And such a movement, unless we are much mistaken, is that recurrence to sounder principles of taste which in so many different departments of art and literature distinguishes our own times.

Were we to attempt to define, in the most general terms, the leading characteristic of this movement, we should probably not be far wrong in calling it a reaction from corrupt conventional standards, and a recovery of first principles with a view to an improved practice. The last qualification severs it wholly in essence from archæology pure and simple; but, inasmuch as it was necessary to go back before a fresh step could be taken forward, the revival, for a certain way, was scarcely distinguishable from antiquarianism. And even now the divorce between the two is not complete. The more progressive artists of the day are denounced by mere antiquaries as rash innovators, and by their opponents as mere archæological copyists. The truth is, that their advance is made from a new starting-point which they could only reach by a preliminary retrogression.

It is curious to observe how important a place archæology occupies, and must occupy, in modern art. There have been times when such a thing as 'keeping' was unknown, and the most incongruous anachronism shocked no one. No mediæval architect, for example, ever dreamed of reviving or perpetuating a defunct style; and the earlier artists clothed their Holy Families or saintly groups in the habits of their own period. Garrick saw nothing absurd in acting Julius Cæsar in a full-bottomed wig; and, except for the ill-omened precedent of the revival of the costume of Brutus at Paris in the days of the Terror, it has been left for our own day to see the Westminster play acted in practicable togas, and the Shakspearian dramas revived with archæological properties and proprieties by a manager who scrupulously appends F.S.A. to his name. We live in an age of criticism, and are never satisfied unless the unities of a work of art are observed religiously, and all its accessories are congruous and 'in character.' Thus, on the Burns Centenary, people thought it in good taste to eat haggis

and applaud the bagpipes; and Mr. Albert Smith, returned from Canton, substitutes Chinese for Alpine fittings in the Egyptian Hall. It is useless to lament, as some do, this 'over-consciousness'—to borrow a phrase from ethics—this almost exaggerated attention to the minutiae of externals, and to long after the careless freedom of less artificial times. We must take things as we find them, and submit to a certain pedantry as a general characteristic of the age. Art and literature, at least in the old world, have a historic past which moulds the present, and which foreshadows the future. Hence it is that the healthiest and most promising artistic efforts of the day have, in one point of view, an archæological aspect; and neither the inventive painter nor the daring architect can dispense with the humbler labours of the plodding antiquary.

This, in fact, is involved in the very name of a revival as applied to art. *Reculer pour mieux sauter*: the proverb implies that the forward spring must be preceded by a backward motion. There is no way of recovering first principles when obscured or lost but by the intelligent study of the past. It is just because men had become disgusted with traditions that had lost all their vitality, and conventionalisms that were fairly worn out, that they began to retrace their steps in search of truth, reality, and nature. The poets of the Lake School, for instance, were following a right instinct when they placed their ideal in a certain simplicity, and naturalness, and unaffectedness. Poor Haydon, too, was dreaming of a right ideal when he thought he was bringing back the high art of Raffaele and Michelangelo by historical pictures on a colossal scale. Flaxman, in sculpture, actually reached an antique purity of design which none of his successors have fully equalled. And Rickman, in architecture, essayed at Cambridge, though with singularly small success, to revive practically that national Gothic, the successive styles of which he had been one of the first to discriminate theoretically. When things had come to their worst in matters of art, the first step towards amendment was of necessity a step backwards. When the lowest depth of degradation had been reached in this country in the first quarter of the present century, there were even then, in various directions, signs and tokens which, to a careful observer, might have presaged better things to come. How remarkably, for instance, the late extraordinary development of English ceramic art-manufactures was harbingered in Wedgwood's beautiful invention of the ware that bears his name! The potteries of Europe, indeed, were the asylums of art in the last century. In painting there was less promise. France was working threadbare the traditions of David and his

school. In Germany there was as yet nothing to tell of the future eminence of Overbeck, though Boisseree, more in the spirit of an antiquary than a connoisseur, was collecting those precious gems of ancient art which now adorn the Munich Gallery. At home our English school remained stationary, never sinking below, nor rising above, an average level in landscape and portraiture, but showing a decided and growing appreciation and mastery of colour. Gainsborough and Reynolds, indeed, had no equal successors, but Turner was already beginning his career and laying the foundations of his unique reputation. And the water-colour painters, who began to exhibit early in the century, were the worthy forerunners of the clever artists who, in later years, have brought that form of art to such high perfection. For the rest, there was so much mannerism, and conventional rules had so largely superseded the genuine study of nature, that a reaction, sooner or later, was inevitable. But of all the arts, that of architecture was in the most languishing condition. The grandiose style of Wren had died out under Hawksmoor and Gibbs, and no school was founded by Chambers, or Stuart, or Soane. Gothic architecture was in general contempt, which was not likely to be diminished through the well-meant patronage of Walpole or the absurd practice of Battey Langley. George IV. parodied a Chinese pagoda amidst universal applause in his Brighton Pavilion; and finding the court end of London brick, did his best, by the help of Nash, to leave it stucco. Very unlike the dignified churches of Queen Anne's reign, the few churches that were built in the earlier years of this century were either grotesquely hideous or indescribably anomalous. All Souls' church in Langham Place, for example, received as a steeple an extinguisher perched upon the Temple of the Winds, which again was elevated over a portico. St. Pancras was even more remarkable for its fabulous cost than for its ugliness: but here, while the main structure was almost destitute of ornament, quaternions of gigantic caryatides were made to sustain the cornices of a pair of subordinate vestries. In domestic and secular works the building art was meaner and baser than at any preceding period. The window-tax and the excise on glass and on bricks combined to produce the greatest possible amount of unsightliness without and of unwholesomeness within. Those were the days in which houses were run up in populous neighbourhoods, avowedly constructed so as to last for the few years of the building-lease and no longer. The last vestige of the honest and substantial detail of the early Georgian days disappeared utterly; and the outskirts of our great towns became fringed with dwellings which

have not one redeeming point of beauty, or convenience, or durability, that can be pleaded in their favour. Some of our readers may remember the graphic description of such modern suburbs given by Mr. G. G. Scott in his late excellent essay on 'Gothic Architecture, Secular and Domestic.' No one could have guessed that of all the arts it was architecture that was destined to be the first to emancipate itself from its degrading thralldom, the first to retrace its steps to the right path, and the first to enter upon a new career of sound and legitimate development. It is to architecture, no less as the mistress of the other arts than in strict chronological order, that the first place is due in a review of the leading facts of the new renaissance of art which this age has witnessed. In addition to which, the English architectural revival, in its continuity, its notoriety, and success, forms by far the most convenient epitome of the greater movement of which it is a part. In other countries, and in other departments of art, the revolution has been less complete. It will be remembered that M. de Montalembert, one of the earliest leaders of the French revolt against Vandalism in art, has referred to English church-architecture, in particular, as the most striking material expression of the vitality of the new principles now at work. It is to this branch of our subject, therefore, that we first address ourselves.

Many circumstances combined to give precedence to architecture in our own art-revival. In the first place, England was full, from the Picts' Wall to the Land's End, of mediæval churches, and, indeed, of secular buildings in the same style. And in spite of many generations of general indifference, or worse—in spite of the expressed scorn of such men as Evelyn and Wren—these remains had never been without a succession of enthusiastic defenders and admirers, and had never ceased to rouse and maintain an abiding interest among professed archaeologists. It would be difficult to over-estimate the value of Carter's elaborate illustrations of Gothic detail in keeping alive this sentiment; and the services of the engravings and descriptions of the *Archæologia* must not be forgotten. Even at so unpromising a date as 1802, Taylor, of the Architectural Library in Holborn, himself a philo-Goth, collected a volume of essays on Gothic Architecture by Warton, Bentham (of Ely), Milner, and Grose. This was meant to be a distinct protest against the prevailing classicalism. Here we may find one of the essayists contending that the term Gothic should be dropped altogether, and the word English substituted; and the appropriate motto of the volume, with reference to the national style, was the Virgilian line: 'Et nos aliquod nomenque

decusque Gessimus.' Again, the veteran John Britton began early in the century those illustrative works which have done so much to spread a knowledge and love of the masterpieces of Gothic art; and among other writers on the same side may be named Sir James Hall of Edinburgh, Kerrich of Cambridge, and Kendal of Exeter. The latter, publishing in 1818, renews the argument for the rejection of the term Gothic in favour of English, although even then Whittington had shown that no designation for Pointed architecture could be adopted which should exclude the Gothic of continental Europe. It is curious enough to see that some of the latest architectural controversies are but revivals of the discussions of forty years ago. But useful as all these antiquarian efforts were in keeping alive the Gothic sentiment, they were barren of any immediate practical effect. The time had not yet come for any onward movement. The happy choice of the Tudor style—not, indeed, the best type of English Gothic, but still a truly indigenous variety—for the Houses of Parliament was the first indication of the turning tide. Hitherto, as in the General Post Office and National Gallery, our public buildings had been always designed in some form or other of Italian. The fortunate precedent set by Sir Charles Barry was destined to have important consequences hereafter in the revival of Domestic Pointed; nor was it without immediate results upon the great contemporaneous development of ecclesiastical architecture. The great impetus to the revival of art in England was given by a religious movement. It was when the deficiency of church room in proportion to a rapidly-increased population had roused the energies of the Church of England, that people felt the need of a working knowledge of ecclesiastical architecture. For nearly three centuries church-building had been almost unknown in England. After the excesses of the Reformation, and the still more destructive iconoclasm of the Great Rebellion, enough churches remained for all the wants of the rural, if not of the urban, population. Pointed architecture, for religious buildings, died out quite as much negatively, from want of occasions of exercise, as positively from the superior attractions of revived Italian. What works of church-building and church restoration were undertaken in the seventeenth century were almost always intended to be in the old style. Under Laud and Cosin there was even a temporary revival; and there are many churches, such as Higham Ferrers in Northamptonshire, Probus in Cornwall, and Castle Hanley in Worcestershire, where very late work exhibits, in spite of defective detail, the general feeling of the Pointed style. So, too, the hall at Lambeth Palace, rebuilt by Juxon, is in its out-

line and proportion a Gothic building—as Pugin was fond of asserting—although the particular features are of an exceedingly debased kind. In the two universities, and in many cathedral cities, the actual practice of Gothic survived to our own days. It could scarcely be otherwise in places where so many noble examples of the style remained to influence successive generations of students or worshippers by their own mute eloquence. And the surveyors and workmen attached to most cathedral churches simply handed down, without breach of continuity, the traditions of their predecessors. So, too, it has been remarked by M. Rio that the Duomo of Milan has itself maintained, down to very recent times, a series of by no means contemptible Gothic designers. Domestic Pointed again, though in a degenerate form, is not even yet extinct in many rural districts of England—along the oolitic range, for example, or upon the millstone grit, or, in short, wherever good building-stone is easily procurable. Mullioned windows, bold labels and string-courses, and well-worked chimneys, are to this day living traditions among country masons in places where stone has not been superseded by the cheaper brick. It is only in the red-brick region of the Midland counties, and the domain of the still less picturesque white brick of East Anglia, that any remains of Gothic treatment will be sought for in vain.

To these circumstances we probably owe the fact that, when church-building became recognised as one of the most pressing duties of the age, it was taken almost as a matter of course that Gothic was the prescriptive style for ecclesiastical architecture. In fact, there was no serious rivalry. The adoption of the Pointed style, in some form or other, was all but universal: and just enough opposition was made by the adherents of Greek or Palladian to give the *éclat* of a controversial victory to the supremacy of Gothic. Here and there, indeed, a church was built in pseudo-classical style. Mr. Pennethorne, for instance, inflicted upon London the nondescript monstrosity of Christ Church in Albany Street. At Wilton, and at Streatham, though thoughtful in plan and sumptuous in execution, premature attempts were made to import foreign forms of undeveloped Gothic without any attempt to mould them to the national type. But the tide set steadily in one direction. The ‘Companion to the British Almanac,’ in its chronicle of architectural progress, reluctantly admitted, year by year, the triumph of the indigenous Pointed style; and in its very last issue, though it reiterates the complaint, it registers the victory.

But the first attempts at Gothic church-building were bad enough to have disgusted the most fanatical admirers of the style.

Very few architects knew anything of its principles; for the general routine in 'offices' had been a dreary course of the five orders, and the most promising pupils, if they travelled, studied Athens, or Rome, or Vicenza, instead of Chartres, or Verona, or our great churches at home. It was here that the antiquarian knowledge of architecture, of which we spoke before, proved to be of the utmost practical value. An intelligent criticism sprung up almost simultaneously with the first practical experiments in the style. The public was not helplessly at the mercy of the professional designers. Every new church was anxiously scanned by lay eyes, ruthlessly dissected, and unsparingly commented upon. Controversy, as is usual, sharpened wits, and the whole question was thoroughly sifted. The history of the Gothic style was explored by the new light of documentary evidence and actual study of its monuments. The gradual growth out of the Romanesque, the first germs of its special characteristics, the accurate demarcations of its periods, and the transitional stages between the periods of development, the orthography of its details and mouldings, the subtle differences of local types, were in turn observed and determined. Some students, like Mr. Petit, devoted themselves to the broad questions of form and outline; others, like Mr. Paley, classified and analysed the delicate curves of mouldings and sections. Others, again, concentrated their efforts on the more subtle task of finding out the informing spirit, so to say, of the style, of studying its adaptation to the ritual requirements of Divine worship, and the poetry of its mystic symbolism. At Cambridge the first principles of Pointed architecture were practically recovered, and dogmatically enunciated, not without the polemical language and hasty generalization which are the characteristics and defects of youth and sincerity, yet with a substantial accuracy which no further investigation has materially impugned; and the 'Oxford Glossary,' by its rich pictorial illustrations, spread far and wide a technical acquaintance with the leading features of the style. The general result from all this division of labour was soon visible in the rapid improvement of design. At first our architects learnt to distinguish between the several periods of the Gothic development. No longer were acutely-pointed lancet windows combined with depressed four-centred arches, nor Norman buttresses attached to Flowing Decorated walls. Ancient buildings began to be copied, bodily or in detail. Mouldings were borrowed, if not at first hand, from manuals; and window tracery was chosen from the numerous illustrations which from so many quarters were contributed to the common stock of facts. Above all, practical architects took to the personal study of our old churches. Their note-books

became crammed with suggestive thoughts and hints, as well as with precedents. There was as yet, indeed, but little originality in their designs: nor was this to be regretted. It was safer, as more than one conspicuous failure proved, to be content with copyism, till they had acquired a knowledge of the essential principles of the new style in which they had to work. They did well not to venture in their armour until they had proved it. Accordingly, the whole land became dotted over with more or less excellent imitations of mediæval churches, attended in many cases by subordinate groups of parsonages, schools, and schoolhouses in the domestic variety of the style. In all this there were many solecisms and many absurdities, and not a little of unavoidable narrowness of mind. Quaint and modest little churches, low and dark and inconvenient, such as our ancestors might have built when funds were scarce in a remote rural district, arose in crowded towns or populous suburbs; while many a hamlet found itself provided with a church, which in its ensemble or its detail was the miniature, and therefore ridiculous, copy of a cathedral. Even Pugin, when he designed his greatest work, the Roman Catholic church in St. George's Fields, did not venture to give it a clere-story. And it was long before it was understood that it was the crowning glory of Gothic architecture that it could adapt itself, by a change of type, to every possible condition of locality, or destination, or funds; that churches might be collegiate or parochial, urban or rural, as might be required; nay more, that there was no specialty of climate, or physical geography, which would not reflect itself in a thoroughly appropriate design. The mediæval artists adjusted by some subtle sense the plastic style in which they worked to every varying circumstance of soil or scene. Upland or lowland, stern moor or smiling plain, the austere granite of Cornwall, the soft clunch of Cambridgeshire, the rude ragstone of Kent, each found its proper treatment and expression at their hands. At a comparatively early period of the revival, the climatic modifications of the style, in order to suit the fierce glare and heat of the tropical sun, were forced on the attention of many skilful observers; but not before an 'Early English' design, with staring triplets of lancets, had been chosen by a committee of amateurs at home as suitable for a memorial church at Bombay. So the movement advanced. Before long the experience of the continental forms of Gothic was added to that of the English variety; and architects who had acquired a mastery over our own home styles, were led naturally to borrow fresh ideas from foreign sources. The earliest stage of the revival was past, and the eclectic period began. Upon this arose fresh controversies. It was questioned whether, under any circumstances, the pure

English Gothic might be crossed with French or German or Italian Pointed. Some maintained that any deviation from the straight path of copyism was to be censured as audacious. On the other hand, more ardent spirits demanded leave to inaugurate without further apprenticeship the architecture of the future; and then the question came into debate what was to be the starting-point of the new development. Ingenious theorists argued that the Perpendicular Third Pointed, as being the fullest triumph of a principle of continuity which was assumed to be the essence of the style, ought to be taken as the culminating point of its perfection. Others drew the line at the mid-point of the Second or Middle style. So far as this, it was urged by these, each distinctive element of the Pointed, as opposed to the round-arched style, advanced in due proportion. Beyond this the balance was disturbed. In the latest Gothics, whether the stiff monotony of William of Wykeham's Perpendicular, the grotesque stump-Gothic of Germany, or the meretricious license of French Flamboyant, you see particular elements carried to extremes, to the manifest injury of the whole. It was with this moderate party that the substantial victory remained. Meanwhile some, forgetting the distinction between building and engineering, clamoured for an iron architecture, instead of being satisfied with the proper subordinate development of the capabilities of that material in construction. From another quarter a claim was put in for the original Romanesque, whence Gothic itself was derived, as deserving to be made the starting-point for that new style, which all but a few narrow antiquaries seemed agreed to anticipate. This was Mr. Petit's theory. The Pointed style, he urged, has been tried and so far found wanting that it ran at once to seed and has worn itself out. Go back, therefore, to that chaotic period, when the fresh life of modern civilisation was just beginning to quicken the relics of the arts of the ancient world, and there search for some fresh elements for a new combination. The horizontal line, the round arch, the dome—here were the data for the new equation. But the dominant school knew well that their sound eclectic method would allow them to borrow any or all such hints from the Romanesque of Lombardy or Auvergne, while it did not cut them off, as the new theory would do, from the achieved victories of the Pointed style. Happily they were guided far more by practice than by theory. They would not part with what they had secured for the chance of something still better. Accordingly the new designs of our foremost architects showed to an observant eye a steady progress from the starting-point of the complete English Pointed. Their works were no longer elaborate combinations and tessellations of

the fragments of a dead style, but a living language clothing original thought. They had acquired, as it were, the art of expressing their ideas in free and noble diction; and, as their experience was enlarged, and new architectural thoughts struggled for utterance, foreign idioms or phrases were naturally introduced for the enrichment of the vernacular speech. Our own architectural style was thus enlarged and improved by contributions from the cognate varieties of continental Gothic; and a judicious eclecticism borrowed from France or Italy whatever, in due subordination to the prevailing spirit of the style, was calculated to give it additional strength, grace, or beauty, in its arduous task of supplying the manifold requirements of a refined and highly civilised age.

The earliest example of this eclecticism in point of time, and the most fruitful in its consequences, was the church of All Saints in Margaret Street, designed by Mr. Butterfield. We are treating the subject entirely as an artistic question: and we advert to this building just as Mr. Ruskin does, the severest impugner of that particular phase of extant religious thought with which this church is said to be connected. He selects it as *the* original work of modern English art, and we follow or accompany him in so characterising it. Here, besides the novel use of red brick, relieved in colour by horizontal black bands, and in its construction departing widely from precedents suited only to another material—in a style hitherto unattempted in England—the architect conceived distinctly, and embodied successfully, though on an unfortunately limited area, the true idea of a town church. Great internal height, a vaulted roof—at least to the chancel—broad arcades, and a copious use of variegated marbles and coloured tiles in the construction of the building, combined to produce an effect which, if unfamiliar to an English eye, could scarcely fail to commend itself to an intelligent spectator the more closely it was studied. We are not saying that the constructional polychrome is entirely successful, or that the architect has always given beauty of form to massiveness and strength of proportion: but here was a true Gothic church, of imposing character, exactly suited to its place and purpose, which, nevertheless, was utterly unlike Wells or Lincoln or Salisbury, and was indebted to no architectural *Gradus ad Parnassum* for its several details. Neither could any foreign building be pointed out as its exact prototype. In fact it was an original design. It was a tentative solution of the problem as to what the architecture of the future was to be. Remarkable as this church will ever be in the history of English art, as the first example among us, for nearly three centuries, of

the rededication of Christian painting to the service of the sanctuary, its influence upon the architectural revival has been no less important. Its brickwork, its polychrome, its marbles and alabasters, its very spire, and even its faults, have been reproduced in many subsequent buildings. And if at least one more recent design, Mr. Street's church at Maidenhead, has improved in some respects upon the original, the merit of precedence belongs of right to Mr. Butterfield's fine conception. Since the first stone of that church was laid, the eclectic movement has made immense strides in its advance. The party reckoned in its number almost every leading architect among the mediævalists. Two great European competitions, for a cathedral at Lille, and for a memorial church at Constantinople, revealed on a conspicuous stage the numerical and artistic power of the English school, and the rapid march of the development. In the Lille competition, the chief prizes were carried off by several of our countrymen, though working in a prescribed style that was foreign and unfamiliar; and in the other contest, Mr. Burges, one of the joint victors on the former occasion, showed his versatility—or rather, perhaps, his mastery of the essential principles of abstract Gothic—by developing a form, which was, in fact, all but an original form of Southern Gothic. The witchery which the Gothic of Italy exercises over almost all architectural students who go to look at it was shown conspicuously in most of the best works exhibited by English competitors on these occasions. Next in order came the selection of Messrs. Deane and Woodward's Italianizing Gothic design for the Oxford Museum. And then the great competition for the Government Offices—unsatisfactory as it was in respect of the conditions, the adjudicators, and the immediate result—brought into clearer light than ever the fact that English Pointed architecture, in the hands of its best professors, was rapidly assuming a new type and character. This was a climacteric period of the revival. It trembled on the balance whether the most important buildings of the time were to be intrusted to an architect of European fame, or whether they were to become the official perquisite of a respectable surveyor. It hung ἐν τῇ ζυγῷ ἀχμῆς, whether the national style of architecture, deliberately chosen for the neighbouring palace of government, was to be as deliberately rejected for the palace of administration—whether the precedent of Westminster Abbey and the Houses of Parliament, or that of the fragmentary banqueting hall of Inigo Jones, or Barry's Treasury Buildings, was to impress the future architectural character on that historic *quartier* of London—whether, again, the style which had vindicated its right to the religious edifices of this century was to be condemned

as unsuitable for secular structures. It was at this juncture that a special committee of the House of Commons was appointed to examine the whole question. Its labours resulted in an important report, from which it was shown that the best escape from the perplexities of the case would be to nominate as architect Mr. Scott, who was beyond question the most distinguished of the Gothic competitors. And, what was almost more important, it was demonstrated that, for all practical purposes, such as costliness and convenience, and adaptation to official requirements and modern habits, there was no advantage whatever in any modification of the Palladian style over its Pointed rival. Common sense, therefore, prevailed, and the English architect of the great church and town hall at Hamburg was formally chosen to build the Foreign Office in the Gothic style. And, a few months later, the Secretary for India having determined to quit Leadenhall Street for more aristocratic regions, Mr. Digby Wyatt, the architect of the East India Company, was associated with Mr. Scott in the task of providing suitable accommodation for that department in contiguity to the Foreign Office. This second step in the right direction is scarcely less important than the first. It is a guarantee that future offices of state, which ere long will require enlargement and concentration, will be subordinated to the general scheme which these two distinguished men will begin. And it is a most happy circumstance that the official architect of the Council for India is one who is likely to co-operate in the best spirit with Mr. Scott, and who, from his antecedents, is certain to contribute some most valuable hints to the elaboration of that developed Gothic which is to be the style of the new buildings.

This forms an epoch in the history of the revival of English architecture. The consequences of this splendid example, as we hope and believe it will prove, of the capabilities of the Gothic style, may be expected to be most extensive. It must be remembered that in this decision the eclectic principle has secured its victory. No one beyond the narrow circle of pure antiquaries, who have never studied the arts of their forefathers with any other than a barren archæological interest, has been found to raise his voice against that admixture of foreign elements which distinguishes Mr. Scott's Foreign Office Gothic as a genuine instalment of such an improved and developed Pointed as may well be thought the characteristic style of our own age. The new public offices are not a school exercise in one of the defined periods of the English Gothic; but their style is a legitimate expression and embodiment of the requirements of the case in a form which has its

own vitality as an offshoot and further expansion of the Gothic principle. The eclectic principle has been of late boldly enunciated, and if not always with its necessary cautions and limitations, yet the practice will keep the theory within due bounds. For the more able of the architectural profession have shown themselves fully alive to the necessity of that process of fusion or amalgamation of imported elements without which the result, however ambitious the attempt, would deserve at least the second epithet of the hackneyed quotation—*rudis indigestaque moles*.

This, then, is the present position of English architecture. It is full of promise and overflowing with vigour. We stand on the threshold, it would seem, of a great future. The capabilities of the improved and enriched Gothic of our day, in its secular as well as its ecclesiastical adaptations, will be explored and developed by an able and enthusiastic band of votaries. And there is more hope than there has yet been at any period of the revival of the general adoption of an architectural style which will fairly represent the wants and characteristics of the age. Meanwhile we observe no symptom of any waning or reaction in the public interest in architectural questions. Church-building goes on; and if there are fewer small churches now called for, the necessity of larger and more important structures is beginning to be felt. Doncaster church, though not aspiring to the full Gothic glory of a vaulted roof, is a specimen of a class of building more important in its bearing upon high art than a whole swarm of smaller edifices. In public buildings, not ecclesiastical, the demand for town halls, spacious rooms for meetings and concerts, assize courts, vestry halls, and the like, is greatly on the increase. Save in one instance, at Halifax, for which an admirable Gothic design has been matured, the more important of these buildings, as at Liverpool and Leeds, have been of classical architecture; which is the more to be regretted because the Gothic of Italy and of Belgium has shown us how vast and diversified are the capabilities of this style for public buildings of this nature. It is here that the example of the new Government Offices will have a special weight. We shall be surprised if we do not see before long a marked preference for Pointed designs for secular use. And this not merely in halls, or museums, or schools, or colleges. The mill and the factory have still to be rescued from a mere negation of style and clothed in a becoming architectural dress. We have seen some of our great seats of commerce nearly rebuilt within the space of one generation with princely shops and warehouses, gigantic in scale and palatial in their materials and ornament. Style only has been wanting. Soon, we hope, it will be seen that something better

may be done than imitating for purposes of trade the feudal corniced palaces of Rome or Florence: and then the warehouse, the club, and the mansion, may afford a further field for the genuine development of our national style.

It is time to turn to other branches of art. Would that the prospects of English sculpture were half as encouraging as those which we have been discussing in the case of architecture! But, although a certain equal level of mediocrity has been reached by most of our best-known artists in marble, there is not only no great exceptional excellence to be noted, but there are not many promising signs of improvement. We know nothing more depressing than a visit to a sculptor's studio: the gulf is so vast between his theory and his practice, between his actual work and the visions of his fancy. We will fully admit the difficulties under which our sculptors labour. Our houses are small, marble is dear, and we have fewer places and occasions for the truthful exhibition of ideal works than were accorded to Greece and Italy. The soul of genius is cramped by the hard necessities of the age, which such men as Gibson and Foley are the first to recognise. The array of casts from the masterpieces of ancient art all round the room contrasts so wretchedly with the mean busts, the vapid bas-relief, or the tail-coated effigy on which you generally find the modern artist engaged. In some conspicuous corner, half hiding the lay figure, will be models of the one or two more ambitious attempts of his younger days, which he has never been happy enough to turn into marble at all—some smiling nymph, perhaps, or self-satisfied angel, or some unintelligible allegory—but still showing promise which has never been realised. Such competitions as that for the Wellington Monument, or the still more ridiculous one for a memorial of the Exhibition of 1851 in Hyde Park, revealed an incompetence and a poverty of imagination among those who contended, for which few of us were at all prepared. It is not that Englishmen have any inherent incapacity for this, perhaps the highest, form of art. Not to speak of a past generation, the works of Baily, as poetic in their conception as they are refined in their execution, and those of Gibson, are enough to refute such a calumny. And several of the statues which adorn St. Stephen's Hall in Westminster, and notably those of Falkland and Selden, are sufficient to prove to the most sceptical that the power of art is still among us if only we could bring it out. Favourable circumstances would produce another and a better Chantrey. What is wanted, we take it, is more encouragement. At present there is little or none for sculpture of the highest class. How few are the private persons whose means

would enable them to give a commission for a statue. A young and ambitious artist may embody a fine thought in a model, and there it may desiccate in clay or discolour in plaster half his life long, for want of a patron. The expense of the process is the first and most serious obstacle to the success of sculpture. From the nature of things this art can never lean on mere popular support. We are no believers in the Art Union system, and think it doubtful whether that kind of raffle or lottery for the benefit of painters, at no loss to the subscribers, is not as mischievous in some of its results as it is unworthy in principle. But we heartily wish the fashion could be introduced of persons uniting together more often in order to present a statue to a church or any other public building. Above all, we must cultivate ornamental sculpture in connexion with architecture. This plan has been partially acted upon with much success for filling the niches of the Oxford Museum and the Wellington College. But all this would follow upon a more true appreciation on the part of the public of the art itself. It is by no means the easiest thing in the world to understand sculpture. It requires some practice or education to comprehend its ideality, its want of colour, its remoteness from all familiar associations. Painting itself, we know, at least in perspective, does not at first convey any definite impressions to an uncivilised mind. But pure form is harder still to understand. In this country, where an absurd iconoclasm has denuded nearly every niche in our churches of its occupant, it is positively no easy matter in many districts to find a sculptured figure. Sydney Smith used to measure the culinary barbarism of a rural parish by its distance from a lemon; and we might safely say that there are thousands of benighted villages which are twenty miles from a statue. We have known an untutored genius who had learnt to carve without having ever seen a figure in relief, and who almost shed tears on first seeing a bust. The revival of architecture was greatly furthered, as we have shown, by the general familiarity of all classes of the population with our ancient churches. Sculpture has had no such advantage. It is possible that the establishment of local museums and schools of art, and the facility of procuring good casts at a cheap rate, from the Science and Art Department—to which we shall have to recur—will do something to correct this defect in the course of time. But it will be long, we fear, before the demand for sculpture of a high class will be general enough and steady enough to insure a good supply. We observe, therefore, with true satisfaction, that the architects of our best new churches are beginning gradually to introduce a little subsidiary sculpture into their works. At first we had

nothing but floral or folial ornamentation, or perhaps a few corbel-heads, crowned or mitred. Grotesques, indeed, were always more popular; and the most sensitive Puritanism was never shocked by a demoniacal gargoyle. But now effigies and bas-reliefs are growing more common. The tympanums of doorways are beginning to be enriched with sculptured subjects; and we have seen interiors adorned with beautiful medallions of the scenes and events of Scripture. One of the first professors of classical art, Mr. Donaldson, has advocated a Procession of Saints to be placed round the tympanum of the dome of St. Paul's; and that most accomplished artist, Mr. Penrose, has pointed out that the decoration of the metropolitan cathedral, which now only awaits the liberality of the citizens of London, must consist of sculpture and mosaic. All these are signs of improvement which we hope will not prove abortive. It would be much to be deplored if the breach were not healed at length between the church and sculpture. Foreign Protestants are not afraid, in their places of worship, of the works of Thorwaldsen; and the order for a statue for the chapel of his native Irish village was the turning-point in Hogan's career. The art, as these two names will show, is irrespective of creed, and so in fairness ought to be its encouragement. It is on this account the more to be regretted that Christian sculpture is not represented in that noble church in Margaret Street, already alluded to. A coarse and ugly bas-relief of the Annunciation externally, and two stiff and inelegant angels inside, are the only specimens of the plastic art we have observed in a building which ought to have been, as it was surely meant to be, an example of the harmonious union of all the arts in subordination to architecture. It is a great misfortune that the mediæval school of Christian sculpture is so little known and so little regarded in modern Europe. In architecture we can go back for a purer inspiration to the glorious works of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries; and in another branch of art the predecessors of Raffaele, and surely that great painter himself, in his earlier manner, show us, if not the perfection of Christian painting, yet at least what were the aims and attainments of the art before any debasing elements had crept in. But in sculpture the student goes back at one bound to the age of Pericles for his models and precedents. We do not mean to imply, as some would do, that the nude deities of Paganism are of small value to the Christian artist of this day. Far from it. It ought, on the contrary, to be of enormous advantage to modern sculpture that the unrivalled works of ancient Greek art are preserved to us. The Parthenon does not teach much to the Gothic architect; but no one who handles the chisel to the end of time can afford to be indifferent to its

frieze. Nor must the legend be forgotten, whether it be literally true or not, that mediæval art owed its greatest expansion to the study, by Nicolas of Pisa, of the antique relief in the Campo Santo. We are persuaded that the intermediate step, the study of the Christian statuary of the middle ages, is wanting as a guide and starting-point for a revival of a purer school of sculpture among us. And we shall not be satisfied till the works of the Pisani, of Verrocchio, and of the other great Florentine sculptors—too much forgotten and neglected by the Italians themselves—are as familiar to English eyes as the Dying Gladiator or the Venus of Milo. This is a task to be accomplished by the art of photography and of casts, which we commend to the Architectural Museum.

In considering the causes of the present degraded state of English sculpture, we may next say a few words as to material. Granting that the marble of Paros or Carrara is by far the most suitable for the higher walks of the art, yet there are cheaper stones to be had at home, which are by no means deserving of the contempt into which they have been allowed to fall. So little demand has there been of late years for the beautiful alabaster of Derbyshire for the purposes of sculpture, that the owners of the only quarries where blocks large enough, and uniform enough in colour, for life-sized effigies can be procured, decline to excavate such large masses, even at an increased price per foot, since it is found to be more lucrative to dig the stone piecemeal for conversion in the kiln into plaster of Paris. This is the more to be regretted, because no material is better suited for sculpture, in connection with Pointed architecture, than our English alabaster, both for its warmth of colour and its easiness of working. It must be admitted that the cold white marble of Carrara can scarcely be made to harmonize with a polychromatized Gothic interior, unless, indeed, some partial gilding, or even some delicate colouring, be added to it. But that colour, applied with moderation and refined taste, is no more alien from the severity or purity of modern sculpture of the highest class than it was from the masterpieces of Phidias, we know practically from the successful though timid experiments of Gibson. But we need not dogmatize here on a vexed theoretic question which is scarcely yet ripe for determination; and of which, as of so many other controverted points, we shall probably be able, in the course of time, to say *solvitur ambulando*. This at least we may say, that our sculptors would do well, as one of the first among classicists, Mr. Cockerell, has reminded them, to make more use of our native materials, such, for instance, as the stones used at Lincoln Minster or for the matchless imagery of the west façade of

Wells. Monumental effigies would become more common if people were not deterred by the excessive costliness of vast blocks of foreign marble; and the mutilated fragments of statues in our ancient churches show that the mediæval sculptors were not above using their chisels on the ordinary materials provided by native quarries. As it is, the expense of sculpture in this country, whether in marble, stone, or wood, is so great, that we can scarcely wonder at the present low state of the art, even in its lower departments. So long as it is cheaper to have bas-reliefs and carvings executed in Belgium than at home, it is in vain to expect that our native artists, however skilful some of them may be, will be adequately encouraged at a higher cost. We have sometimes thought that the electrotyping process might afford a possible remedy for some of these evils. The deposit of copper in a mould formed from the sculptor's clay model will reproduce the most exquisitely-delicate touches of his hand with the minutest fidelity, in a material which is far more durable and less liable to injury than marble, and at a fourth of the expense, besides the saving of all the time and labour which the translation of the plaster cast into stone or marble necessarily costs. This process will doubtless supersede entirely the more cumbrous and hazardous method of casting in bronze; and though we by no means wish to discourage the more legitimate and the highest expressions of a sculptor's thought in the chiselled marble, yet we see in this chemical agency a power which may well be made available for many of the more ordinary purposes of decorative art.

In the general prospects, however, of English sculpture it is impossible as yet to see much that is hopeful. There is no want, we repeat, of rising genius; but it has no opportunity of manifesting itself. Many who have intended to become sculptors have been forced, by want of encouragement, to adopt other less dignified branches of artistic labour. It is probably to the want of critical knowledge and interest among the general public that great part of the blame is to be attributed. Artists live upon the appreciation and sympathy of the community. If the taste of the public has not advanced beyond the stage of allegorical impersonation, and the stale symbolisms of the mural tablet school of art, it is not to be expected that sculptors will endeavour to supply a demand for better things which is non-existent. It is the public that wants education quite as much as the profession. Something ought to have been effected for the elevation of the general taste by such displays of the treasures of foreign sculpture galleries as were afforded by the Sydenham Crystal Palace before the days of its degradation. There are also many

valuable casts at the South Kensington Museum, though they lose half their utility by their unfortunate juxtaposition with other works of art or industry with which they have no relation. A praiseworthy attempt, indeed, has been made to organize in this museum a special hall of modern sculpture; and there, amidst a number of plaster casts by living artists, many of them very inferior productions, stand side by side those rival goddesses, Gibson's Venus and Hiram Powers' Greek Slave, in their original marble. The scheme for thus exhibiting first-rate works of modern art is worthy of all praise, and a word of gratitude is due to the liberality of the owners who have lent these noble statues for the instruction of the public. We have often felt inclined to wish that the authorities of this department would arrange for the proper exhibition, by means of isolation, of such art-treasures as these. A work of sculpture, to be fully appreciated, must be seen, as it were, in an architectural frame—each statue in a shrine of its own—as is the case with the great glories of the Vatican and the Louvre. A crowded statue gallery inevitably suggests the most ludicrous line in the Groves of Blarney. There ought to be space enough in the expansive sheds at Brompton for the proper display of sculpture; and, as the museum is opened at night and lighted with gas, there might also be occasionally an exhibition of the best statues under the effects of strong light and shade—such as, in a torchlight visit to the Vatican, cast a flood of new beauties and thoughts and interpretations on the Apollo or the Laocoon. How much architectural accessories lend to a statue is seen even in Gibson's majestic sitting figure of the Queen in the Throne Room at Westminster; though unfortunately the scale of the marble is too great for the apartment, and the attendant allegories are not a little obtrusive.

If one might argue from the growing popularity of statuettes in Parian or biscuit-ware that a taste for true sculpture was on the increase, we should not have so much anxiety about the future. But we fear that this application of ceramic art, though it may be useful in diffusing a knowledge of particular groups or figures, and even encourage a love of form—in a much more genuine way, too, than could ever be done by the conventional groups of Dresden china which this manufacture has superseded—yet somewhat debases the public taste, not merely by the too general unworthiness of its subjects, but also by accustoming the eye to mere prettiness rather than ideal beauty. Truly noble sculpture must be of the size of life or larger. The perfection of modelling cannot be attained on a small scale. It is not surprising, indeed, considering the cost of chiselled marble, that half or

quarter-sized statues are becoming somewhat common, as was so painfully apparent in the collection of modern sculpture in the nave of the Manchester Art-Treasures Exhibition, where a statue of life dimensions was scarcely to be seen. This makes us the more desirous that, for churches or public buildings, our hint of an occasional union for the purpose of giving a commission for a work of sculpture could be acted upon. In spite of the present low ebb of the art among us, we should have hope for the future if we could reckon on sufficient encouragement for works of a really high order. There are English sculptors, we doubt not, in spite of appearances, who could hold their own against Baron Marochetti, who with a single success has achieved at least equally egregious failures, if they had proper support. Competition seems to have failed as applied to sculpture. Let patronage be tried. If a definite commission for a special subject were given to any of our foremost sculptors we do not think they would be found wanting. It was the enlightened patronage of Thomas Hope that gave the world Thorwaldsen. Modern millionaires have shown less discrimination in their use of their fortunes. But smaller men might combine for such an object. There is excellent precedent for it. It was from guilds of craftsmen and shopkeepers that Donatello, Ghiberti, and their fellows received commissions for their immortal works in the Orsanmichele of Florence.

Passing onwards in our review, we find reason to hope that the prospects of painting among us are far more decidedly encouraging. Patronage has never been wanting in this branch of art; but portraiture and landscape have been always far more popular, and, by consequence, far more lucrative, than the more ideal class of subjects. The cost of a picture is not so serious a matter as that of a statue. Many a young painter has been started early on the road to success by a well-timed commission. Thus, in the two most recently published biographies of painters—Thomas Uwins and Thomas Seddon—we observe that the former, as a young man, painted a subject for a brother-artist, Sir Thomas Lawrence, then President of the Royal Academy; and the latter received his first order for a picture from a schoolfellow, who was himself engaged in the battle of life. The lives of most modern painters seem to show that, in spite of the over-stocking of the market, few men who are content to work hard and live frugally fail to get a living, while such as have real artistic power for the most part secure competence and reputation. Of late years, too, the habit of collecting has spread downwards in society. A taste for art, not always most refined perhaps, but still real and capable of improvement, has been manifested

among the mercantile and trading classes. New pictures are even said to find their best sale in the great seats of manufacturing industry; and there was more fitness than at first sight appeared, in Manchester becoming the scene of the Art-Treasures Exhibition. Again, there are now so many local collections of paintings, either permanent or temporary, that some rudimentary kind of connoisseurship is very widely diffused, even among the less-educated part of the community. In London the opening of the Sheepshanks Gallery by gaslight must have done a great deal in popularising pictorial art. The other free public collections, such as the National Gallery, Marlborough House, and Hampton Court, have always attracted ample numbers of humble visitors; but the opening of the South Kensington Museum after working-hours has been a far more important educational agency; and we are not surprised that multitudes of people, in spite of the unfortunate remoteness of the Museum from the centre of London life, have found their way to the well-lighted gallery at Brompton. The prospects of art must always be hopeful where the general public takes an active and intelligent interest in its achievements and progress. And no one can observe the signs of the times without perceiving that the growing prosperity of the country of late years has resulted, among its other consequences, in a wide diffusion of better acquaintance and more sympathy with the interests of art. Difficult as it may be, as we said at first, to determine the most favourable conditions of artistic vitality, yet it may safely be asserted that, as it is the embellishments of life that must be first abandoned in times of monetary pressure, so, at least in modern society, the general well-doing of the mass of the people is certain to favour the growth and development of the fine arts. Political economy influences the arts in this way in a more homely and direct manner than the transcendental ingenuity of Mr. Ruskin deigned to notice when he lectured under this title at Manchester. Cheap bread affects the studio quite as soon as most other workshops where men labour for their living: and a rumour of war is scarcely felt more sensitively on the Stock Exchange than in the suburbs or *quartiers* where artists congregate. The present art-revival in this country is happily due to no mere passing whim or fashion of a monarch or an aristocracy, but has a wider basis in the intelligence and refinement of the prosperous middle and even lower classes. What the former can do, and what is the only thing that it can do, has been shown, not only elsewhere and in other times, but conspicuously in our own days at Munich. There, in a third-rate capital, singularly little favoured by nature, the ex-king Louis pro-

duced an exotic growth of art, by a system of hot-house culture, which for a time fairly astonished Europe. Churches and basilicas, in Byzantine, Lombardic, or Gothic; Pinakothek and Glyptothek and Library, rich with frescoes and marbles; theatres and palaces, and loggias and public buildings, in noble architecture; a royal factory of glass painting, and a host of *ateliers* of sculptors and painters, testified to the king's munificence, and to the breadth if not to the purity of his taste. But this was no genuine art-revival. It languished even before the monarch's abdication, and has become nearly extinct under his successor. At no time did it thoroughly rouse the nation's sympathy; and from the first it was wholly out of proportion to the resources, the antecedents, and the general state of intellectual culture and refinement of the population. The costly plant therefore perished so soon as it was left to itself in the open air; and the art monuments of the Bavarian capital are doomed probably to a premature decay. The very opposite of this is fortunately the case in England. Here we have had no very conspicuous royal patronage of art. The Queen and her accomplished consort have done something to encourage art, but the life of the movement is its universality and its extension downwards. Churches are built and restored, and pictures are collected, by multitudes who make no pretensions to aristocracy. Our public buildings reflect the general taste of the nation, because they are due exclusively to the votes of the popular or representative branch of the legislature. The artistic improvement of modern London is the result of private taste and spirit, and not of imperial magnificence imposing its will on a submissive municipality. There have never been wanting in England enlightened and munificent patrons or collectors of art, from the time of Carleton and Arundel to Horace Walpole or Angerstein. But though the flame of connoisseurship was kept alive among us by these and the like men, they could not spread the light abroad for want of sympathy. Society at large was not ready for that revival of a love and appreciation of art which the last quarter of a century has witnessed. This it is which gives us hope for the future. The enjoyment of art has passed beyond the narrow circle of aristocratic or even highly-educated admirers. What a pregnant fact is the opening of Leggatt's Gallery in the heart of the City, in Change Alley, for the use and delectation of those middle classes whose taste in art, but a few years ago, soared no higher than a wish to possess some favourite engraving, such as those of West's stupid pictures of La Hogue or the Boyne. And even more significant is the daily advertisement of the Canterbury Hall, in the Westminster Road, where, to the attractions of the

cheap concert is added a collection of pictures. Nor are these pictures, as some might have been disposed to fear, of a vulgar kind or questionable character. On the contrary, the list comprises the names of Gainsborough and Haydon, Creswick, Danby, Millais, and Maclise; and even the works of foreign painters, such as Couturier and Rosa Bonheur.

This growth of popular taste has been responded to by a proportionably improved standard of general artistic attainment. The various exhibitions of the London season, if they do not show a decided progress from year to year, yet by no means deteriorate. There is, of course, more temptation than ever to adopt an easy, fluent style, such as may enable a man to produce, in the shortest time, the greatest number of saleable pictures; and certain painters, both in oils and water-colours, might be accused of a tendency to become rather picture-manufacturers than artists. But this has always been the case more or less. The lately published Rubens Papers prove—what might, indeed, have been guessed—that many accredited works of that prolific painter had comparatively few touches of his own brush. The great master, however, managed somehow or other to inform all the works that issued from his studio with the spirit of his own dashing, vigorous style. And other famous painters who have made great use of their pupils have taken care not to allow their reputed works to fall below their average standard of excellence. But it must always be the case, that of the multitude who make a moderate success in art, a few only will reach perfection. When the ‘parlours’ of the middle class, no longer satisfied with engravings, begin to require for their fashionable adornment paintings in oil or water-colours, which have been hitherto confined to the dining-rooms or drawing-rooms of a higher rank, it is inevitable that very questionable specimens of art will be turned out by the score to meet the new demand. It is said to have been long a branch of commerce to supply to the United States reputed pictures by the ancient masters, such as one sees perpetually being copied in the great galleries of Europe; and the story is told of an American citizen expressing a lofty scorn of English collections, when he first crossed the Atlantic, because, unlike his own, they contained no original Raffaelles or Da Vincis. But there is probably more truth in what has been asserted lately without contradiction as to a growing demand from our colonies for paintings in oil. These orders are supplied, in the course of trade, by some of the Manchester houses along with the other goods peculiar to those places; and the same subject, whether a landscape or a sporting scene, or a piece of still life, is multiplied by the hundred for

the colonial market at a ridiculously low price. It is fair to say that the originals, and even the repetitions, are often not without merit: and we cannot at all regret that the thriving Australian gold-digger and sheep-farmer should evince the laudable desire to possess a work of art. The future of the great English settlements would be wanting in one important element of happiness if they showed no sign of growing appreciation of the arts which soften and embellish human life.

But if we must make up our minds to the patient endurance of a vast amount of mediocrity, we need not on that account fix at a low mark that higher excellence which is to be attained by the few. And we observe with satisfaction that the chief organs of art-criticism appeal to a very high standard in exercising their most useful and indispensable function of watching and commenting upon, with approval or censure, the productions of our foremost artists. There can be no healthier sign than the vigour and the abundance of the literature pertaining to art which has been so conspicuous a feature of late years. How great must be the demand of the reading public in this subject when judged by the abundance of the supply! The history and practice of each branch of art, the biographies of artists, monographs of schools or styles, and criticism fugitive or permanent, all testify to a widely-awakened interest in such topics. Præ-Raffaellitism itself, with the controversy to which it has given birth, has by this time a literature of its own. We do not purpose to enter at length on the history of this schism, a subject which has been by this time nearly exhausted. It may suffice to say that the general practice of art has been largely modified and benefited by the influence and example of this able but eccentric and perverse school. Each recurring exhibition of the Royal Academy shows evident tokens that the necessity of attending more closely to truth of detail, to force of expression, to dignity of moral purpose, and to a healthy imitation of nature is more and more apprehended by our artists in general. Præ-Raffaellitism, if we must use this ridiculous term, in its origin was a natural and necessary reaction from a system of effete conventionalism. And in so far as it vindicated the necessity of truthfulness and reality, of the original study of nature, and of the due attention to the inner meaning of art, it deserved all our sympathy. Unhappily, if not the leaders yet the followers of the movement carried their reaction too far. Passing beyond the true mean in the opposite direction, they came to subordinate the ideal to the actual, and in their pursuit of the minute accuracy of accessories they forgot alike abstract beauty and general harmony of effect. The extraordinary finish

of Dutch art in the *genre* style, in which the labour of half a life time was expended on a pot or a pan, a carrot or a carpet, had begun to be estimated at its right value—as a waste of time and thought on unworthy subjects. But the new school were ready to elaborate with nearly equal minuteness the grass or flowers of the field, or the pattern of a brocade, without observing that due proportion, that balance of light and colour, which was never absent from a Mieris or a Douw. All details, whatever their relative prominence in nature, were, so to say, equally accented. The softening, mellowing, blending, obscuring effect of atmospheric distance was by some of these artists ignored altogether. Because aerial perspective had been abused and made to cover, by a touch of hand, a multitude of sins of omission and carelessness, the new school painted their subjects as though they were all under the exhausted receiver of an air-pump. Because the conventional treatment of the middle distance had become an academic commonplace, it was thought original and meritorious to project a group, like a coloured elevation, on one plane; while each subordinate detail was made as independent and as prominent as though it were the special object of a microscopical observation. As a natural consequence, finish of execution and conscientious truthfulness of representation came in time to supersede the ideal conception of beauty. If a model was exactly copied, its faults were perpetuated as much as, or more than, its good qualities. And thus many who were fully prepared to admire and to sympathise with the movement were revolted by a crudeness and often a repulsiveness, for which the evident good intentions of the artists, and their undoubted power as colourists and draughtsmen, were no compensation. However, what amount of truth there was in the new principles has already had its victory. We owe to the so-called Præ-Raffaellites a growing sense, among our English school in general, of the importance of the true mission of art, and of the necessity of reality and patient fidelity in the imitation of nature. The leaders of the school will probably gradually abandon their most marked extravagancies, and continue to delight us with works of powerful thought and deep moral significance, but without the sectarian excesses which their more feeble followers will alone perpetuate. Præ-Raffaellitism has received upon the whole a hearty welcome. We have often wondered that it is not more clearly perceived that the early election of Mr. Millais to be an Associate of the Royal Academy is itself a proof that no such unfair prejudice exists among the older school of painters as would exclude conspicuous artistic merit from its due reward. If the followers of the sect who, fearing or resenting rejection by the Hanging Com-

mittee, organise private exhibitions of their own works, would strive to reach the level of Mr. Millais' excellence—excellence which exists in spite of his unhealthy love for the ugly—they would find no obstacle to the full recognition of their abilities. The name by which these artists designate themselves, while it testifies to an important truth, is nevertheless a misnomer; for they would be the last to profess a mere archaic system or to wish to revive the imperfect drawing and execution of the earlier Italian painters. If, indeed, they really provided us with the strength of Giotto, the grace of Perugino, or the purity of Fra Angelico, they would need no apology and need fear no opposition. As it is, their ordinary works repel us by a studied and intentional eccentricity which has no parallel among the early painters of Umbria. And it is this quality in Præ-Raffaellite art which seems most to strike foreign critics. An intelligent paper in a late number of the *Revue des Deux Mondes* by M. Henri Delaborde proves that a Frenchman is not struck so much by the subject-matter, the mysticism, the colouring or manipulative skill of this section of English painters, as by their *naïveté* and defective sense of beauty. And it must be freely confessed that if the pen-and-ink sketches exhibited lately at the French Gallery by Mr. Simeon Solomon, the youngest disciple of the school, are to be taken as prognostications of the future, we have just reason for alarm rather than confidence. For in spite of considerable power and originality, anything in worse taste than that young gentleman's delineation of the Israelitish captives by the waters of Babylon, or his version of the familiar scene of the faithless nun from the old Dance of Death, has never fallen under our notice.

From Præ-Raffaellitism the transition to the great literary supporter of the sect is natural. The influence of Mr. Ruskin's voluminous writings on the art, and especially the painting, of the age must not be overlooked, if we would form a right estimate of the present or prognostication for the future. We believe that the startling paradoxes and splendid inconsistencies of this brilliant author have been exceedingly useful in provoking criticism, in arresting people's attention, and interesting them in art-questions. And his earnestness and ability must have driven home, as it were, in many minds many deep and true thoughts as to the purpose and responsibilities of art. With all his exaggerations, all his fundamental narrowness of view, all his illogical impulsiveness, and all his visionary speculation, no writer of the time has enriched our art-literature with more noble eloquence or suggestive thought. It is fortunate that he has no followers, and has founded no school. But we doubtless owe to

him in great measure the wide acceptance, or at least recognition, of many wholesome principles, which perhaps have gained their popularity less through their inherent truth than through his persuasive declamation.

The improvement and advance which we have been tracing are not confined to the department of the oil or water-colour painter. The illustrated books with which the press teems show a marked progress in the design and execution of their plates. Some of these volumes are enriched with original sketches of the highest order; in others the design, however clever, betrays the mannered hand of the hackneyed xylographic illustrator. The art of engraving is not likely to be other than stationary till it has been proved what is to be expected from the photoglyptic process. Nor has the effect of photography upon the prospects of art been as yet determined. More and more wonderful as are the triumphs of light-painting, yet the gulf between the most minutely-accurate imitation and the creative functions of the really great artist is less than ever likely to be bridged over in proportion as it is made apparent by the inherent defects of the process. Portraiture will never henceforward be able to dispense for its facts with the aid of photography; but never was it more clearly understood than now that the ideal of the human countenance is something very different from the actual lineaments reflected in the camera—something which can only be represented by the magic skill of the artist's brush. Landscape and *genre* will perhaps be handed over to the photographer as his undisputed province. But the more the higher branches of art—such as require invention, imagination, and composition—are attempted by the process, the more conspicuous is the failure. We are learning a new lesson; namely, that art, in its highest function, does not so much represent to us what is as what ought to be. The inalienable gift of the true artist is to interpret to us the unseen and the transient by what he presents to the outward eye. The sun can do no more than give us the bare facts, not their inward significance. We will not enter at length upon the question of coloured photography, though we are confident that it is wrong in principle. At present, however, the vast popularity of the process has the good effect of employing, at ample wages, as many able miniaturists as can be found.

Leaving this doubtful domain of art, we discover in the revival of fresco the most important and remarkable of all the proofs of modern progress. There are still but few English artists who could work on the wet plaster; but that there are any is in itself a memorable fact. We shall not be satisfied till the walls of our churches and halls become more frequently the

vehicle of this highest form of the pictorial art. We say the highest form, for it is only on the enlarged scale of mural decoration in due subordination to architecture that the greatest of painters seem to have ever found full play for their genius. The examples of the historical frescoes in the Houses of Parliament and of those in the pavilion of Buckingham Palace gardens have been worthily followed in the eastern wall painting of the church in Margaret Street, where Mr. Dyce has just completed a series of beautiful works which we are disposed to think the most successful exhibitions of modern English religious art.

Painting, then, if not so much advanced as architecture, is far beyond sculpture in its practical revival. We see no reason to fear that its progress will be checked. On the contrary, so long as the public appreciation of art continues to grow, the maintenance of the present high standard, or rather the elevation of that standard, may be expected. So far from there being any signs at present of weakness or decay, we see many proofs of strong vitality. Let us hope that after the proper equilibrium is re-established between the opposing views of art which we have noticed, the united brotherhood of English painters may inaugurate in friendly rivalry a splendid future for the national school. Perhaps, ere many years, our nearest continental neighbours may be ashamed to remember that the Louvre does not reckon among its treasures even a Reynolds or a Gainsborough, and still less any specimens of the contemporary British school. By that time, too, we may hope that our own National Gallery—enshrined in a more worthy temple than it now occupies, but in the same central situation—will exhibit the entire growth and progress of English painting, from the miniaturists of the seventeenth century through the whole series of the great names that succeeded Hogarth to the present age. Whatever may have been the temporary depression of English painting, there is no modern school, even when we remember Scheffer, Vernet, Cornelius, and Overbeck, which, take it all in all, in promise as well as performance, surpasses our own. That this hopeful view of English painting is not exaggerated may be inferred from the highly-favourable judgment formed of the British school by a late French visitor, M. Théophile Silvestre. This gentleman, who came to this country on a not very intelligible mission, to report on the state and prospects of English art for the French government, expressed, in a very eloquent lecture before the Society of Arts, his surprise and pleasure at finding so much to admire in our insular school of painting. Other foreign critics, when they saw the English pictures in the Fine-Arts Exhibition at Paris in 1855, and again the British Gallery at the Manchester

Exhibition of 1857, were equally struck with the powerful colouring and general vigour of the national style. And such testimonies, it must be remembered, are for the most part extorted from the reluctant lips of prejudiced observers. Lastly, we may point to the great success of the Arundel Society as a crowning proof of the growing taste for the higher forms of art. The accession of 300 members in the course of one year—attracted, doubtless, by the marvellously-beautiful chromo-lithographs of the St. Sebastian of Perugino from the fresco at Panicale, and of Mrs. Higford Burr's interior perspective of Giotto's Chapel of the Arena at Padua (which were included among the publications for 1856), can only be explained by the increasing interest with which *true* Præ-Raffaellite art is regarded. The Arundel Society has a very important mission, which it has hitherto fulfilled with much zeal and discretion. In its latest and more extended operations—the obtaining accurate drawings of the best of the many perishing frescoes of Italy—it is going beyond its original promise, and performing an invaluable service to the cause of sacred art in general. We trust that means will be taken for the public and gratuitous exhibition of the priceless treasures so acquired. The Society's publications are in arrear; but we are told that the works in hand, and nearly ready, for 1857 and 1858, will be so good as to compensate in some measure for the delay. Let us hope that the growing list of subscribers is a measure of the increasing love of pure art among the more influential classes. And, as an equally good augury of more extended interest in these matters among the million, we may reckon perhaps the fact of the publication of Messrs. Gullick and Timbs' excellent and cheap manual, 'Painting Popularly Explained.' The latter gentleman has had far too much experience of the literary wants of the time to be deceived; and we may conclude that his most useful compilation is an evidence that more and more people are anxious to acquire some practical knowledge of that art which they have learnt to appreciate and to love. It is surely not unreasonable to anticipate from so much good seed a fruitful harvest.

In another, but by no means unimportant branch of our subject, namely, the application of art to the design of the furniture and implements of common life, it seems to be granted by common consent that our own country had fallen behind all its rivals in the race. The very superiority of our mechanical appliances had conduced to the undue depression of the art-element of manufactures. It followed upon the extreme subdivision of labour, and the combined rapidity and economy of production, that the less obviously useful qualities of good taste

and elegance and fitness had come to be comparatively disregarded. This divorce of beauty from utility in English manufactures was the great fact substantiated by the Exhibition of 1851; and from that discovery we may date a real desire and an energetic endeavour to remedy the evil. Some years before that, so far back as 1837, the Government had already begun to recognise the policy of encouraging the practical study of art among the manufacturing classes. A central school of design was established in Somerset House with public money, and more than twenty affiliated schools were founded in various parts of the kingdom. But the movement, however well meant, was premature. The need of any specific instruction in the art of design was not then recognised. No one knew, or cared for, the discreditable fact that the manufactures of which we were so proud were remarkable, above all things, for poverty of design. The schools were founded and furnished with all necessary apparatus, but no students presented themselves. The employers of labour did not encourage their workmen to travel beyond the ordinary routine of the factory: the artisans themselves were satisfied with their accustomed tasks. The old patterns were worked up over and over again, or a few new ones borrowed, or purchased, from abroad. Above all, the public neither demanded a more tasteful kind of design nor appreciated it if it was offered. Nor, again, was the state of elementary education in the country such as to make it probable that the schools of design, as then constituted, would become useful or popular among the working classes, for whose use they were too exclusively confined.

Hence it was, that from the Exhibition of 1851, when people saw with their own eyes how superior, in respect of beauty of form and colour, were the art-productions of other nations, and when the press, almost with one voice, enforced the same moral, began a more hopeful condition of the public mind on this question. To this we owe the establishment of the Science and Art Department of the Committee of Council on Education, which, with whatever shortcomings, has already done much, and will do more, for the propagation of generally sound principles of art among the community. The machinery which has been put in action for this most desirable object, in connexion with the museum at South Kensington—which is the head-quarters of the department—and with the various schools of art in other places, deserves especial notice and commendation.

First of all, the importance of a more general diffusion of the art of drawing is thoroughly apprehended and strongly inculcated. Without, indeed, some knowledge of the use of the

pencil, it is difficult for ordinary minds to appreciate the more subtle distinctions of form. The best way to educate the eye is through the hand. We are of those who hail, with especial satisfaction, the more frequent introduction of elementary drawing-lessons among the common things taught in our parochial schools. The slightest acquaintance with the art of delineation helps to develop powers of observation and comprehension of form. It gives to all, as it were, a new sense and new capacities of enjoyment; while for those who are to become art-workmen, the faculty of design is so beneficial, that it deserves to be considered indispensable. The art-department accordingly offers assistance to all schools, in which drawing is made a branch of instruction, by supplying, at a reduced cost, the necessary apparatus, examples, casts, and materials. This system of encouraging and co-operating with private efforts is far better in principle than the foundation of so many state-supported institutions. Nor is it less successful in practice. For example, in 1851 the schools of design numbered 3,296 students, at an average cost to the government of 3*l.* 2*s.* 4*d.* per head. In 1855, under the new system, the number of students had reached 31,455, while the expense per head had fallen to 16*s.* 2½*d.*, and we understand that the later results are still more satisfactory. The next step in the operations of the department is to train teachers, male and female, and to certify them when duly qualified. This, too, includes the assistance in the way of studentships, pensions, and prizes, granted to deserving students while in course of training, or at the beginning of their professional career. The training-schools at South Kensington are extremely perfect in their arrangements, and the curriculum of study pursued in them is complete. Drawing, geometry, perspective, painting, modelling, moulding, and casting, are taught by separate professors, besides anatomy, mechanical and architectural drawing, the theory of design, and artistic botany. The whole course embraces twenty-four successive stages of art-instruction, which are subdivided into six so-called groups; and a student going through the whole course ought to become a thorough master of design. Help is given to students by free admissions and weekly allowances; and the certificates are granted after examination. In the local schools of art—which are by this time established in all the more important seats of industry, and in many other places where an intelligent desire for art-education has been manifested—the department holds yearly examinations, and awards prizes. The prize works of the students from all the schools are collected for a general annual exhibition in London, at which ‘national medals’ are adjudged to the most deserving.

Every national medal that is thus gained by the pupil of a local school of art entitles the school where he was trained to the privilege of selecting works of art from the museum of the department to the extent of 10%. Besides this, the regular inspection of the local schools, and the circulation among them, on the principle of a lending library, of valuable books, engravings, and casts from the central museum, are other equally important branches of the department's operations.

We have given this outline of the system pursued by the authorities at South Kensington, because we know that very few people have any idea of the completeness and efficiency of the machinery. We do not know that we can suggest any improvement on this practical and judicious scheme. A visit to the museum, not merely to the public part—where it must be owned that the heterogeneous nature of the contents, the flimsy hideousness of the building, and a certain air of *charlatanerie* that attaches to it, have not unreasonably repelled many people—but to the class-rooms, and library, and schools of art, where the actual work of education is going on, reveals a very promising scene of activity and progress. It can scarcely fail but that great practical good must result in time from this immense extension of art-education. It must be confessed, however, that no great practical results have as yet been produced. The department was ill-advised enough to venture last season upon an exhibition of art-manufactures, which were supposed to exemplify the results of its teaching. But the degree of improvement of design in that collection, which could be fairly attributed to the existing schools of art, was lamentably small, and we are persuaded that the experiment, being premature, was an injustice to the scheme. It will be a work of time to effect a thorough change in the general design of English manufactures. A well-trained student, invited to produce new designs for a Manchester, Birmingham, or Sheffield manufacturer, will often find himself hampered at first by the traditions, prejudices, and even interests of his employer. In many cases his task will be, for a time, to design poor things in a better manner rather than good things in the best manner. And, after all, it must never be forgotten that improved design must be shown to be as compatible with cheap production as the inferior design to which we have been so long accustomed. Now, a promising student may very well carry off local and national medals, and be the pride of his school and of the central museum, and yet make a practical failure when the delicate task is prescribed to him of inventing something that shall cost no more than the most vulgar products of the workshop or mill, and yet be at once

novel and beautiful. So far as an opinion could be formed from the works exhibited last summer, we should say that the South Kensington students failed not so much from any want of practical skill as from the absence of sound judgment and moderation. We do not desire to see a revolution effected in common design so much as a reform; which, if it is to be lasting, must be gradual. If sound essential principles are inculcated—not as matters of opinion, but of certain truth, and as applicable to all the various forms of art—the good leaven will work in time, almost imperceptibly perhaps, till it pervades the whole mass. We deprecate any overstrained effort after originality. Invention and imagination require the strong curb of common sense in the first efforts of youthful artists.

Nor can we shut our eyes to the possible danger that the manual skill of the trained students, unless it be tempered by discretion, may outstrip the slower progress of the improvement of taste in the public mind. Of the many visitors to South Kensington, some few, doubtless, educate themselves more or less by the works of art which they find there; but the majority of them need a living teacher and monitor to tell them ‘what to avoid’ or what to admire. There was much to be said in favour of that bold style of criticism on bad design which lent so piquant a zest to the early exhibitions of the department in Marlborough House. People there could see the faulty design of a carpet or a cup ticketed with reprobation, and might probably carry away some idea of the right and wrong of art. Is it impossible that occasional short lectures should be given on the public evenings at Brompton, which the more intelligent visitors would probably listen to with real profit? Formal lectures, indeed, are delivered in the theatre in great abundance every session. But, for our parts, we should like to see these addresses made more familiar and elementary. Why should not the experiment be tried of less variety in the courses and more frequent repetition? But short peripatetic harangues in the galleries would be best. So much zeal has been shown by the officers of the department, and, upon the whole, so much good sense, that we hope they will devise some successful method of extending the rudiments of art-education among the crowds of visitors which they attract to their museum.

Among the more educated classes, the leaven of art is slowly but surely working. Such a book as Sir J. Gardner Wilkinson’s lately published treatise on Colour and Taste—generally sound in its conclusions as it is, however cumbrous in its treatment—is itself an evidence of a wide-spread interest in questions concerning the principles and laws of art. The very shop-windows

preach the same lesson. It is not very long ago that a person might seek all over London in vain for a carpet with a correct and suitable pattern; but now, good designs, with well-contrasted colours and no vulgar attempt at the imitation of incongruous subjects in high relief, are to be seen everywhere. Hangings and curtains and wall papers are now easily procurable with which the greatest purist could find no fault; while it is only a few years since that tolerable designs for woven fabrics were not to be had except in stuffs expressly made for purposes of ecclesiastical decoration. Indeed, as we have said at the opening of this paper, to the good influence of the earlier architectural revival may be attributed a great deal of the subsequent improvement of the more secular applications of art. In metallurgical processes this is strikingly the case. The proper decorative treatment of wrought iron was first revived by our church architects. But now there is perhaps no branch of manufacture in which a general improvement of design is more marked than in this. Ceramic art is less indebted to the ecclesiastical movement; but its progress towards perfection has been equally rapid and satisfactory. The Staffordshire Potteries, which are only now quarrelling about a monument to Wedgwood, are scarcely more indebted to him as their founder than to the late Herbert Minton, who was the first to show what latent capacities for art-design might be developed among us by wise encouragement. He and his imitators have now equalled many, if not all, of the most beautiful processes of antique ceramic art: and we see no reason that the union of an enlightened taste and commercial enterprise should not make the future products of the upper valley of the Trent more famous even than the wares of Gubbio or Faenza. It is not a little curious that, as we understand, a great proportion of the borax now used in our modern Etruria is imported from the immediate neighbourhood of the old potteries of Italy. This is the true law of English manufacture—to import the raw material, and then convert it, by our unexampled manipulative resources, into a thousand forms of utility and convenience, and, let us add, of beauty. It will be a subject of true national pride when the convenient and the useful shall be no longer divorced from grace of form and colour and artistic truth.

Pursuing the subject into other of its subdivisions, we fear that in textile fabrics the advance of better principles of design has been less conspicuous. Nottingham, indeed, would seem to have improved in some degree its lacework; but Macclesfield in its silks, and Manchester in its cotton prints, seem obstinately unprogressive. Nor do we perceive that the outlery of Sheffield,

or the hardware of Birmingham, have profited as yet to any perceptible extent by the better knowledge, now so widely spread, of the right principles of design. The projected Exhibition of 1861—which, we suppose, is decided upon, though a decennial period seems scarcely long enough for a full test of relative progress—may, if judiciously managed, give an impetus to the steady amelioration of English art. But the public, the consumer of manufactures, and the final arbiter of taste, has the future very much in its own hands. There is no one who cannot do something in his own circle, however narrow it be, for the dissemination of a knowledge of the true principles of design. The movement is to be helped forward in two ways, not merely by the practical encouragement of purer art-manufacture, that is to say by the selection of the best designs at the mercer's, or the carpet-shop, or the china-warehouse, or the upholsterer's, but by the encouragement of the art of drawing in all schools, whether high or low, over which any one may have influence. The tradesman who is asked repeatedly for a certain kind of article invariably inquires for it of the 'traveller' who supplies his stock; and the travellers' reports shape the productive operations of the manufacturer. Conversely an enterprising manufacturer may introduce some improved design into his novelties for the year: but the adventure will be a failure unless the retail dealer has reason to think that such goods will attract customers. So that the demand for improved design on the part of purchasers is never without an appreciable result. And scarcely less important is the steady encouragement of elementary drawing as a branch of education. There is no school so poor, or so humble, that the lesson in drawing might not alternate with the now universal lesson in music. The Directory of the Science and Art Department, published at intervals, and procurable at the museum, contains ample information of the terms upon which Government aid is afforded to schools, or unions of schools, where the managers are willing to introduce this admirable innovation upon ancient practice. Every one in this way has it in his power to do something to further the movement for the propagation of art.

The importance of a more general cultivation of art in England at the present day is a text that hardly needs a commentary. It is not merely in a moral point of view that whatever refines and elevates life is desirable for the well-being of a people, but in the present state of commerce the development of the art-element of our manufactures has a positive material value. Time was when this country, through the aid of its coal and iron and machinery, feared no rivals in its great task of supplying the markets of the world. This condition of things is rapidly

changing. Other nations tread on our heels in the quality of the products of their manufactures, and almost undersell us through the great advantage they possess in the relative cheapness of their labour as compared with the rate of wages in England. If, in addition to this, foreign goods are manifestly superior to our own in their general taste, their form, or colouring, or harmony, or adaptation to their purpose, the balance of trade will turn against us. The late movement has been originated only just in time to check this most undesirable contingency. But our manufacturers must persevere in their efforts to recover lost ground. No element of success can be safely disregarded by those who enter the world-wide competition of modern commerce. But there is no reason for despair. The result of free-trade in corn upon our agricultural interest has been not, as some prophesied, a severe discouragement and a stop to production, but, on the contrary, a prodigious development of improved skill in the cultivation of the soil. Machinery and scientific culture have been applied to remedy the defects of the old-fashioned traditions of farming; and vastly-increased crops enable our agriculturalists to hold their own in face of the unlimited importation of foreign grain. In like manner must enterprise and capital command—as they always can command, when properly directed—the services of high art in every branch of manufacture. There can be no kind of reason why this art should not be indigenous. It is one of the most absurd superstitions to imagine, as some do, that England can never be an artistic country. So it used to be said that the English would never be a musical people:—a prophecy completely stultified by the extraordinary cultivation of this art of late in every part of the country. What proof is there of any inaptitude in the English mind for the fine arts? From earliest history English art was celebrated throughout Europe. English illumination and English embroidery were among the most precious treasures of the mediæval library or sacristy. In what respects was English Gothic architecture inferior to the parallel styles of the Continent? And there are traces that a native school of painting existed here, which, so far as we may judge from Mr. Westlake's interesting publication of early English drawings, would bear comparison with other contemporaneous developments of Teutonic art. In sculpture, the statuary at Wells and Lincoln extorted the admiration of Flaxman and Cockerell. If in the seventeenth century the practice of English art appeared to droop, at any rate our countrymen knew how to extend a judicious patronage to foreign artists. Holbein, Mytens, Van Dyck, and Rubens had no reason to complain of a lack of English connoisseurship. Later still, and in the worst

age, the various styles of English china prove that our countrymen were scarcely inferior in design to their contemporaries, while Wedgwood, as we have said before, was before his age in a genuine art-revival. During the long isolation of England in the great continental war, art undoubtedly languished among us. But returning peace and prosperity very soon rekindled a brighter flame; and there is surely nothing in the revival which we have sketched in this paper that could prove an antecedent unfitness for art-culture in the national mind. On the contrary, in architecture and painting we are clearly equal if not superior to any existing school, and in other arts scarcely inferior. It must not be forgotten that not in England only, but all over Europe, art was uniformly degraded during the last century. Here and there flourished a decent painter or a tolerable sculptor; but what general cultivation of high art existed in France or Germany or Spain or Italy? It is a reproach to us that our public galleries have no typical pictures of David or Le Sueur; but we desire them as historical specimens of style, rather than for any intrinsic merits of their own. In Italy itself art died out almost as entirely as elsewhere. And if this be true of universal art in the last age, not only at home but throughout Europe, the existing state and prospects of art on the Continent are scarcely so encouraging as in our own land. How miserable a spectacle is a modern pictorial exhibition at Florence or Berlin or Munich! The school of Overbeck, we regret to say, shows no promise of continuance; and at Dusseldorf there is already as much mannerism as originality. Not that we despair by any means of the various continental schools; but we contend that our own prospects are quite as hopeful. If in industrial art the balance appeared a short time since to incline against us, this is greatly to be accounted for by the superior development among us of the mechanical facilities of production. Just as at this moment we find our naval supremacy rivalled by the steam fleet of France, which has profited by all our experience and entered upon the fruit of all our vast and often unproductive outlay, so the manufacturing art of Belgium or Germany competes with us on unequal terms, since it starts afresh from the point of which we were first to reach by long years of enterprise and exertion. There may seem to be one exception to our low estimate of continental art. The *articles de luxe* of Paris have never lost, and that not altogether undeservedly, a high reputation for artistic taste and fancy. But nothing, when it comes to be examined, can be baser or more paltry than the great bulk of modern French decorative design. The sentiment of art has remained, but the practice has miserably degenerated.

Not, however, that we wish to undervalue the merits of what has been preserved, and we still hope to see the great artistic powers of the Parisian workmen exercised in a purer style of design.

Our own manufactures are on their trial. We dare not confidently predict for them a triumphant future; but we hope it and expect it. As education advances, and intellectual tastes become more widely diffused, and all classes of society learn to appreciate more and more, by actual contact with it, what true art is, surely there is ground for thinking that, with whatever excesses or temporary retrogressions, the forward march of art in England will be steady and well maintained. It is no merely literary revival, no merely aristocratic fancy, no merely accidental phenomenon that we have been considering; but a true practical work of recovery and progress—a necessary correlative, as some have thought, of the higher spiritual tendencies that are strongly operating upon modern society, a deep and wide movement of the whole national mind. It is, we say again, no mere dilettantism, no fashionable pursuit of some evanescent development of artistic fancy, but a thorough and honest inquiry into the principles of art with the practical resolution to carry those principles into practice. May it not be reasonably hoped that the indomitable energy of our countrymen, when once aroused, will be as successful in matters of art as in other fields of action? If, as we believe, Englishmen are determined to cultivate art as well as science, we are sure that, having the will, they will find the way.

VI.

INDIAN CONVERSION.

1. *Second Report of the Select Committee of the House of Lords on Indian Territories, together with Minutes of the Evidence. Session, 1852-3.*
2. *Copy of a Letter from the Earl of Ellenborough, President of the Board of Control, to the Chairman and Deputy-Chairman of the East India Company, on the Subject of Education. 29th July, 1858.*
3. *A Dialogue on the Knowledge of the Supreme Lord, in which are compared the claims of Christianity and Hinduism. 1856. Cambridge: Deighton, Bell, and Co.*
4. *Articles on Caste in the 'Times.' April 10 and 12, 1858.*
5. *Government in its Relations with Education and Christianity in India. By Rev. George Percy Badger, Chaplain in the Diocese of Bombay. 1858. London: Smith, Elder, and Co.*

PREDICTION or prophecy—we are not, of course, speaking of inspired prophecy—may be founded upon one of two grounds. One basis of such moral anticipation or prediction may be the experience of actual present progress, when we see an opinion or a faith visibly advancing; when the new idea catches mind, and inoculates mind, and the current is obviously set in. This is an easy ground of prophecy, for, in fact, we do not so much predict as observe. Another is a more difficult one, when, in the absence of present progress, we predict upon a ground of reason, and see in deep, but as yet dormant, causes a certain basis of future conquest and success.

We do not wish to speak at all slightly of the results of missionary labour in India when we say, that on the great question of Indian conversion the former ground of prediction is hardly at present open to us. A certain number of converts, however small, when compared with the whole, may as a sample show, for those who want convincing, that the Hindoo mind opposes no organic hindrance to the reception of Christianity; but when we consider how very small this number is, what a mere fraction even of this is high-caste, and how many are not Hindoos at all, but rude aborigines, who had only the strength of a simple wild religion to oppose to the spiritual aggression of the missionary, we can hardly take the ground of present progress on this question. Providence has mercifully connected labour with hope: the smallest success of our own experience

enkindles; and the missionary who adds a family or two to the Christian faith is immediately sanguine about the conversion of India. But an outside spectator, suddenly called upon to say whether, in his heart, he believes that the two hundred millions of India will one day be Christians, feels for a moment an alarmingly honest scepticism struggling with what is for the instant a conventional faith. There stands, in appearance, the impregnable fortress of Brahmanism as yet untouched. Hindoo immobility, and the subtle tenacity of orientalism confront him, and India, like the Medusa's head, turns the believer into stone.

But though the anticipation of success founded upon present progress is hardly open to us in forecasting the future of India, the other ground we have mentioned is. We assume that the obstacle in the way of Christianity in India is that Brahmanism occupies the field; that if Brahmanism went, Christianity would, by the force of those evidences internal and external, for which the Gospel would be able then to procure a hearing, succeed to its place.

The question then is, Can Brahmanism stand? We believe, on the ground of Scripture prophecy, that it cannot; but independently of the scriptural ground, and subsidiary to it, do we not see a ground of reason, a great argument resting on the principles of human nature, biding its time, and only waiting for a fair and solid contact with that religion in order to demolish it—slowly and gradually, of course, but completely? We assume, that wherever existing under the sun, man is man, endowed with the plenitude of human reason in all that is essential to it, and with the whole moral and religious nature of the true human being. The question then is, Does Brahmanism answer to the religious type in human nature? Is it in harmony with the moral standard in human nature? Is it in harmony with physical truth? Is it in harmony with the ends of society? If it is not, but is in disagreement with all these, then if human nature has only time, fair play, and moderate encouragement, human nature must gradually cast it off. We have, apart from present progress, an ultimate appeal to the original type of rational humanity.

Let us first of all take the department of religious truth; and in this department first the principle of Divine worship. On this subject the normal idea of the human race is the worship of one God. The human mind, in proportion as it becomes enlightened, is found, as a matter of fact, to demand this doctrine, which simply comes out with the growth of reason and civilisation in the human race.

We say the *worship* of one God. Intellectual pagans were not opposed to the unity of the Deity simply; their error lay in the article of worship, rather than in the article of unity.

They believed in one God, and they believed in a principle of worship, but they did not connect that Being with that principle, and make God the object of worship. They contemplated Him as the centre and the mainspring of the vast machine of the universe; but there they stopped short, and, having invested Him with the naked attributes of the Great First Cause, they gave their worship to a host of local deities or superior demons. We observe the coolness with which the ancient philosophers discussed the existence of a God. The Valeriuses, Balbas, and Cottas met and argued, some for and some against it: they talked with pleasant unconcern, they criticised with literary courtesy the strong and weak points in each other's arguments; the snuff-box, as it were, went round, and all was philosophical ease and good humour as the question, whether there was a God or whether there was not a God, trembled in the balance. The truth is, that the question with them was entirely a philosophical as distinct from a religious question: it had nothing to do with practice; no one duty depended upon it; the idea of worshipping this First Cause never occurred for a moment to these men: it would have appeared a pure mistake, a simply absurd puzzleheaded confusion of two totally distinct departments. A theory of the origin of the universe was a branch of philosophy not of religion, and had as little to do with practice as a Newtonian theory of gravitation. Will that sage who has just asserted with such force the existence of one Supreme Being, feel the smallest hostility to the popular worship of the day? Not the least. Not a particle of the spirit of St. Paul at Athens, or a spark of the honest fire of the iconoclast rises in him, as he leaves the lecture-room to sacrifice to Neptune or make a libation to Ceres. But his distinction is plain: that was *philosophy*, this is *worship*. Worship is a principle by itself: it is not connected with the truths of reason: it does not apply to the First Cause of the universe: it applies to that order of beings to whom custom has appropriated it. That ancient primordial power of *impression*, which antedates not only reasoning but reason in our nature, and exists in us like the remains of a former creation, had established those mighty thrones in the air, and assigned them local and national relations. Reason then taught a Deity, irrational impression gave the object of worship.

Exactly the same distinction forms the basis of, and gives the key to Brahmanism. Brahmanism asserts one Supreme Being, eternal, unchangeable, infinite, immaterial, omnipotent, omnipresent, God, Very God, Brahm. But the very next article prohibits the combination of *Deity* and *action*: those two great

metaphysical poles and opposites must not meet; the union would be suicidal. Brahm is a motionless, characterless, qualityless, colourless, essence, pure unity, pure simplicity—a residuum of analysis, which it is difficult to distinguish from nonentity; without consciousness, without intellect: he neither does, nor understands, nor wills, but simply *is*, the substratum of everything, himself a nothing. All *soul* is indeed of this nature, according to one Hindoo school, and is distinguished from *intellect* on this point. The one *acts*, the other *knows*. Intellect is the busy principle: it designs, provides, develops, combines, harmonizes, organizes, constructs, and adapts means to ends; but it is simply a material birth from primary or plastic matter, the original element ‘indiscrete’ and insoluble of the physical world—*Pracriti*. Soul is the sublime, quiescent looker on, the complement of the action of the world, itself no agent; she is as the spectator who responds to the drama, which would be an imperfect performance without an outward eye: she gazes upon nature, ‘exhibiting herself like a dancer, going through many postures, and twisting herself into a thousand shapes’ before her, and watches the play and sport of the multitudinous evolutions of elemental *Pracriti*. Were for knowledge, as the attribute of soul, substituted *love*, the distinction would border on a Christian truth, that pure intellect is not the immortal or spiritual principle in our nature, while love witnesses to its own spirituality and difference from a cerebral function. The whole creative and governing power of the universe, all that *does* anything, is thus laid down as *matter*, while soul only looks passively on: and the Deity, as the great collective soul, is the great universal motionless contemplator; the world with all its life, motion, and mechanism, being reflected upon the sublime mirror of the divine mind, as the hanging woods, the changing clouds, and clear sky of some scene of nature are pictured upon the unconscious bosom of the lake.

But how did such a Being as this create the world? This is the great difficulty with Hindoo sages. They *apologise* for the creation, and can only explain it as a great exception, if not mistake—the result of a convulsive moment in the organic life of Brahm, when he awoke from his solitary repose and said, ‘Let me become many.’ He returned to regular divinity immediately, but *nescit vox missa reverti*, the unconstitutional act could not be recalled. The issue of such an irregularity, however, is *Ajnana* ignorance, and *Maya* illusion, and it is the triumph of the contemplative life that it dissolves the fiction of created existence, and a divine *act*.

Such a Supreme Being as this is no object of worship or

prayer, for we cannot worship an infinite negation; and the extraordinary phenomenon, (which does not for a moment, however, agitate—as what does?—the sublime stolidity of writers of manuals) of a sect of Hindoo atheists, called Sankhyas, who, in a sphere of fanatical superstition, are only regarded as mildly heterodox, receives an explanation in the fact, that a First Cause who is no object of worship may as well be the seminal matter of the heterodox Hindoo as the impersonal abstraction of the orthodox; that it may as well be *Pracriti* as *Brahm*. Accordingly the Hindoo, like the ancient intellectual pagan, does not worship his Supreme Being. If scattered instances are found of it in the sacred writings of Brahmanism, the system does not recognise prayer, or prescribe one act of worship to *Brahm*, who has not a temple raised to him in all Hindostan. A host of demons or created deities—mere scintillations of the Supreme Deity, and delegated ‘guardians of the worlds,’ at the head of which are *Brahma*, *Vishnu*, and *Siva*, no true divinities, but emanations and creatures of *Brahm*—absorb the worship of the Hindoo. All these deities, says the Sankhya worshipper of them in Dr. Rowland Williams’ dialogue, ‘are high forms, and probably very glorious and eminent forms of intellect . . . but in the infinite roll of ages, they like ourselves must become subject to the eternal law of change; their wisdom and their power have bubbled up out of the froth of the abysmal ocean as it heaves into existence, and in turn they will subside and give place to others whether better or worse.’

Intellectual paganism and Brahmanism, indeed, both adopt unconsciously the great difficulty of philosophy as to the relations of man to an Infinite Being. How can you put yourself into relations with an Infinite Being, it is asked? Do you represent Him to yourself as infinite? That is impossible; you endow Him with personality, and you have no idea of personality but such as involves limitation. The Infinite Being may exist, then, but the being whom you worship is not an infinite being, but a finite. This is Hume’s religious position. Hume expresses his entire belief in the existence of a God or intelligent Author of nature, but he refuses to worship Him, because worship degrades Him. ‘To *know* God,’ he says, quoting Seneca, ‘is to worship Him. All other worship is indeed absurd, superstitious, and even impious. It degrades Him to the low condition of mankind, who are delighted with entreaty, solicitation, presents, and flattery.’ Coleridge proved the impossibility of seeing a ghost by the simple argument that if you saw him he was not a ghost. Hume proves the impossibility of worshipping God by the argument that what you worship is, *ipso facto*, not God.

By putting yourself into relations with the Infinite Being, you make Him a finite one: a God worshipped is a demon, and his worshipper is an idolater.

As opposed, then, either to the worship of many gods, or the non-worship of one, and cutting through any philosophical difficulty in the way, the normal idea of worship in the human race is the worship of one Infinite God; and this idea can be used as a basis of prophecy, as an idea that must come more and more out, and cast out all others that are opposed to it. A rude polytheism or pantheistic polytheism is alike a forgery and an adulteration of the rational idea of worship, which genuine idea must always have the tendency to supplant the base one.

We come now to another great doctrine, that of a future state. The missionary counts on the matter-of-course belief of the Hindoo in a future state as a common ground between Christianity and Brahmanism. It is observed that the Hindoo has no difficulties on the subject; shows no trace of Western scepticism; takes a future state for granted; and requires no more argument to convince him why he should live hereafter than why he should live now. We prefer a faith which conquers doubt to that which has no element of doubt in it, and exhibits brute strength at the expense of the sensitiveness of life and reason. But what we are going to observe now is, that the Brahmanical idea of a future life is, however strong, not the normal or natural idea of man on that subject, but a corruption, a forgery, and an adulteration, such as we have shown the idea of worship to be.

The natural idea of a future state is an extremely simple one—that of continuing to exist beyond the term of this life in another world, just as we have continued to exist beyond yesterday in this. The preservation of our personal identity is thus the very essence of the idea; the state changes but the person is for ever the same. Reason justifies to itself, on the ground that it is part of itself, that which would otherwise be the most extravagant of all dreams and a speculation—wilder than any of Gnostic or Valentinian, Norseman or Celt—this marvellous expectation, this universal second sight in man, by which he is ever seeing a form beyond the boundary of time, and that form himself; this instinct which transplants personality and consciousness beyond the barrier of utter visible ruin; which levels all that interrupts, assimilates all that is heterogeneous, and extends the visible world in one plane into the invisible.

Now let us look at the Brahmanical doctrine of a future state. In the first place, the doctrine of metempsychosis utterly confounds, at the very outset, all our notions of personal identity.

A man becomes, according to this doctrine, several men in succession: he is first the Great Mogul; he is then a Rajah; he is then a Brahman, and several other personages afterwards. All these are, according to all our plain natural conceptions, so many distinct individualities. A man is born, lives, and dies with the consciousness of being one particular person, the Emperor Aurenzebe; a man is then born, lives, and dies with the consciousness of being the Pandit Acharya, and nobody else; the same whole existence with the same exclusive consciousness is repeated in the persons of Shom, the Sudra tailor; of Damma Jee, the elephant driver; of Musseeh, the ivory carver; of Mullich, the Thug; of Dowlut Raow, the Rajpoot marauder. Nor is there any reason why the course of metempsychosis should confine itself to the Peninsula, or why, though the doctrine of it is eastern, its action should be confined to Oriental blood, and prohibited from dipping into the heroic ages, the Olympiads, the *anni urbis conditæ*, the Anglo-Saxon, Norman, and Tudor periods, and adding to the above one multitudinous personality any successive names which we may choose to take, from Theseus to Sir Robert Peel. A ploughman and a cobbler are two as real, distinct individuals as any two most distinguished historical personages in the world; and, therefore, if the former two can be one person, so can Plato and Pompey be, Attila and Peter the Hermit, Roger Bacon and Horace Walpole; and all six can be one person as easily as any two. Out of any chronological chart which gives every century in order pick a succession of the most celebrated persons, with as much regard to variety in the kind of celebrity as you like;—all these may be one man; there is no limit to the number of apparent persons which, upon the doctrine of metempsychosis, may be only really one, except the condition of succession—that one man cannot be several apparent men alive at once, but must be those persons divided from each other by death: and, therefore, if the world lasts as long, one man may be fifty, five hundred, five thousand, five million apparent men. But who or what, in the name of reason, is he at the end of this career? what is the unit or single person which a Jewish high-priest, a Chinese emperor, a mediæval schoolman, an Elizabethan poet, a Nova Scotia baronet, Charlemagne and the late Mr. Joseph Hume compose? Such a doctrine confounds all our notions of personality, and so violates, at the very outset, that which is the very point of the natural idea of a future state.

We have no doubt that were we arguing with a learned Brahman, he would bring forward many subtle and ingenious reasons to prove that we could not show any logical absurdity in the doctrine of metempsychosis—any metaphysical impossi-

bility in one personality pervading any number of distinct lives. He would urge that we did not know what lay behind the phenomenon of infancy, or what impenetrable barrier of oblivion might separate a present from a former consciousness; he might admit that consciousness of past existence was the natural property of personality, and that, therefore, there was an apparent presumption against a man having once been somebody else in the circumstance that he was wholly unconscious of this entire past existence; but he might rejoin that, for anything we know, this exceptional and abnormal state might be corrected at the ultimate point or goal of the career of man, when all the chambers of past existence might be opened in the mind, and the individual at last see his whole real length of personality, and become conscious of himself and all his actions from the first. But what subtle philosophical arguments can possibly outweigh the intense natural conviction in the heart of every man that he—the self of which he is conscious—is one whole and one sole individual; and that, living and dying with no other consciousness than what he dates from infancy, such consciousness marks one person? We have, indeed, no other idea in our minds of a human person but this; which is, therefore, utterly violated by the supposition of personality embracing whole human lives entirely cut off from each other. The doctrine of metempsychosis has appeared to some a natural doctrine; but it can only be a natural doctrine to those who do not examine their own ideas, just as eastern metamorphoses of men into horses and horses into men are natural to children; and though Pythagoras and Plato adopted it, the philosophy of those days, however deep in an imaginative and moral sense, did not excel in common sense or accuracy. If so many whole separate human lives disguise one living person, and so many separate individual consciousnesses are only the external crust of one true individual, this is a mystical incomprehensible personality of which we have no conception.

But this confusion of personal identity is succeeded by another as great an adulteration of and contradiction to the natural idea of a future state. There is a great deal in a name. Warburton proves from their doctrine of a resolution into *re-ir*—the absorption of the departed soul into the Deity—that the heathen philosophers did not hold the doctrine of a future state: but that which Warburton calls the denial of a future life, figures in Brahmanism as a future life. The final state of the soul, that to which it aspires and to which all these transmigrations tend, is absorption into the Deity: the individual soul is dissolved into the universal, and loses all personality and consciousness.

We might here comment upon so disappointing a termination of a career of disjointed personality, whole lives passed of which the individual does not remember one moment, and whole successive selves of which he has been altogether unconscious. We wait for the ultimate point when all these several links will reunite, and when, at any rate, the individual will be able to look back upon the complete past, assume the consciousness of the whole of his existence, and see the whole of himself. But just at the point when he should be put in possession of his full self, he is absorbed into the universal soul, and he is annihilated as a conscious being altogether. But we go to another point. An absorption into the Deity has a grand sound about it, a pretence of ineffable elevation; but, upon examination, it exactly fails in meeting the true want of the soul, the natural instinct desiring the continuance of the very self, which the genuine doctrine of a future state satisfies. This is the craving which is implanted in us by God, to pretend to satisfy which by absorption into God, is simply to abandon all that is substantial and honest in us for a spurious shadow. We cannot possibly care for any state of things that does not carry our own true existence along with it: ourselves must first be provided for on this primary matter, and we can then begin to think of other beings besides ourselves; but upon the strength of the Divine existence to be indifferent to our own, is falsehood to that God who has made us the individuals we are, and made the continuance of that individuality our first interest, in comparison with which everything else is as dust in the balance. The empty, pompous idea of absorption, then, substituting grandeur for truth, does just not contain the kernel and true *desideratum*. This weak idea, which rises up when faith is not strong enough to admit the solid one, is not the real doctrine of a future state, but an *evasion* of the doctrine, covering a *denial* of it—offering a superficial medium between existence and non-existence, which is, in truth, the latter. When man dares not believe in a personal immortality, he substitutes the sham of an impersonal one, and talks about absorption. But ask any one resting or working, reading in his study, walking in his garden, or talking with his friends, speaking in the senate, or administering in the office, whether he had rather continue to be the person which he is or be absorbed into the Deity, and he will say undoubtedly the former. That is, then, the voice of nature; and those solemn forms that sauntered in eternal contemplation in the Elysian fields, or recreated themselves with eternal games of discus or bowl or javelin, mingling with them the memories of past deeds and friends—even the Scandinavian heroes in the Hall of Odin, and the Red Indian Hunter with his

faithful dog, buried with him to be his companion in the new world—all these embody the natural idea of a future life more correctly than the simple liquefaction and impersonal life of the Hindoo absorption.

The development of revealed religion and that of Brahmanism on this subject show a striking contrast. In revelation there has been a development on this point. The pious Jew rejoiced religiously in this life with its 'butter of kine, and milk of sheep, with fat of lambs, and rams of the pure breed of Bashan, and goats, with the fat of kidneys of wheat, and the pure blood of the grape,' as the gift of God, and the mark of the Divine favour: he was satisfied with true present relations to an Almighty Being, and left the future as a distinct prospect to itself. But a time came when 'immortality was brought to light,' and when this life shrank into nothing. This was a change then, but it was a bright one: it prepared man for present chastening, but gave him a heaven above to look forward to.

So Brahmanism has had a development, but it has been a very different kind of development. The primitive Arya exhibits something of the spirit of the Jew—a genuine, simple appreciation of physical prosperity as a sign of the Divine good will: he rejoices in good fortune, victory, glory, plenty, exuberance, cows and fat pastures, butter and honey, corn and wine, overflowing larders and rich feasts; and he exults in it all as the mark of the favour of his gods, and the infallible token of his own matchless orthodoxy. It is a terrene, religious joy in a most successful compound of earth and heaven, the true faith mingling in delightful harmony with the teeming flock and fruitful field, not without a sense of satisfaction in the special circumstance that this mixture is enjoyed at the expense of the 'infidel,' *i. e.* the unfortunate aboriginal, whom at one stroke he has deprived of the two best possessions in the universe, his farming stock in the visible world and the Divine blessing in the invisible: the same victory which has gained the enemy's fat field having also proved his creed to be untenable and impious. The Arya's deities are personifications of the sunshine, rain, clouds, wind, the productive powers of nature, and the genial influences of earth and sky: one prime favourite is Soma, a personification of the rich milky juice of the Soma plant—a deity who, as an object of worship, would perhaps be analogous to a god of butter, or a god of curds and whey. The honest Arya prays, and thus does he pray:—

'A libation of milk, O Indra and Varuna! we pour it out for you, drink and be propitious. Guard the pious man from sin, protect his cows,

and give him abundance. Preserve us, O Brahmanaspatis! that man does not perish whom Indra, Soma, and Brahmanaspatis preserve. I approach Sadasaspati, the wonderful, the beloved, the beneficent, for the grace of wisdom, also for the gift of opulence: he hears the thought of the devout; he endoweth the sacrificer with marvellous plenty. I have seen Narasansa, the most brave, most glorious, splendid as a star of heaven. O Agnis, amplifier of strength, whom we worship with an offering of butter, be favourable, O giver of meat, exhilarator, protector of households, lord of beatific nourishment! O Asvins, wonderful, voracious, let your horses bring you to my sacrifice: sit down, O men, on the carpet, bestowers of good things, and give us from air and sky, all-delighting wealth.'

The reception which the worshipper recommends for the 'dasyus,' or enemies, the 'goat-nosed,' or 'noseless' aboriginal is very different:—

'Indra and Soma, burn the devils, destroy them, throw them down—ye two bulls—the people that grow in darkness! Hew down the madmen, suffocate them, kill them; hurl them away and slay the voracious. Indra and Soma, up together against the cursing demon! May he burn and hiss like an oblation on the fire! Put your everlasting hatred upon the villain, who hates the Brahman, who eats flesh, and whose look is abominable. Indra and Soma, hurl the evil-doer into the pit, even into unfathomable darkness. May your strength be full of wrath to hold out, that no one may come out again.'¹

Thus alternating between his creed and his dairy, the primitive Arya pours forth his rude and simple piety in the Vedic hymn; but a deeper spirit, in course of time, comes over Brahmanism; it too, like revelation, leaves the sacred sunshine of present life, and *looks forward*. But what is the prospect which it places before its eye when it does look forward? It is that prospect which is involved in the favourite *cultus* of Siva the Destroyer—a perpetual universal vanishing and passing away; generation after generation coming in only to disappear again for ever. The mind of man is indeed so marvellously accommodated in all respects to his mortal condition, that even this aspect of things is not without a subtle, latent pleasure constitutionally attaching to it: nobody can tell how much would be lost in the shape of pleasing melancholy were we all immortal here; everything around us has an interest derived from the simple circumstance of mortality which otherwise it would want: the dead are sacred because they are dead, the living little less than sacred because they are to die: the past is romance, the future is mystery, and the idea of succession is the basis of the poetry of life. So far we are all worshippers of Siva. We pause when some great man, or some old man has gone, or when the last tip of the sun's orb has vanished from the

¹ Article on Caste in the 'Times,' April 12, 1858.

western sky, and say—it is over. While life lasted, and while day lasted, the past was divided with the present: now we have an integral whole past, and we reflect that this is a sample of an endless succession of such wholes. But our doctrine of a personal immortality turns us away from this prospect to another; the Hindoo's empty shadow of an impersonal future allows *him* to be engulfed in it: his absorption is a shadow and an abstraction; *this* prospect is his real futurity: his immortality is endless mortality, an eternal succession of evanescent beings: he cannot escape from this idea; the knell of all nature tolls in his ear, and the universe is a vast funereal mystery to him, like the gloomy, interminable, inexplicable procession, which obeys the dreadful secret of a dream. Such is the practical result of a counterfeit and adulterated idea of a future life, which starts with confounding, and ends with destroying, personality. In the combination of metempsychosis and absorption, the true idea of immortality is lost, and the mind is thrown back upon that which inspires the whole later development of Brahmanism—the visible empire of Death.

From religion we turn to morals. If it is true that a change of religion is the only road to a change of morals in the Hindoo, it is also true that his morals are a strong lever for working a change in his religion; that, as evidence which must ultimately appeal to a natural conscience *against* Hindooism, it is, however temporally obstructive, fundamentally a weapon on our side in the contest with Hindooism. A religion which sanctions immorality must fall with the rise of the moral standard in the mind of its votary to a natural level.

The Hindoo moral system rises from two main foundations. One is an all-penetrating ceremonialism. The cravings of a shallow conscience are specially met and appeased by an unceasing course of easy, petty perfection, just as those of a deep one are disappointed and feel themselves trifled with; and the Hindoo ceremonial law combines, with subtle craft, the utmost completeness and finish with the utmost indulgence, by means of a scale of reward which allows no waste, crowning the perfect observer with the first prize, while the most negligent has his proportionate advantage, thus stimulating the zealous, not deterring the idle, and accommodating itself to everybody.

The other foundation is moral in a way, though a tremendous abuse of a moral power—*i. e.* a coarse, one-sided, and monstrous development of it. We mean what is called *power of will*. The inner criterion of a true religion, or the peculiar *nature* of its moral law, is quite as characteristic of it, as its preference of the moral law to the ceremonial. Christianity demands the

exertion of the will in subordination to another test of action. Is an act required or recommended as being in harmony with our relations to God or man? then you must exert your will sufficiently to do it; but the exertion of the will for its own sake, and as a mere feat, is no part of Christianity. But the will, spiritual in Hindooism, exerts itself for the sake of the feat, and exhibits its strength for the mere purpose of showing how strong it is. Hindooism *strains* the will, as if the pure quantity of it which an action or course of life showed were the moral test. Upon this principle arises the whole system of voluntary self-torture, one devotee surpassing another in the length and agony of self-inflicted pain. We need not go into details given in every book on India, the incredible violations of the animal frame and every part of it, the forced attitudes of body and mind sustained for years. These acts are truly astonishing as exhibitions of simple will, but that is all they are. Hindoo high morals are feats done for their own sake, like a conjuror's or athlete's. No wonder that such 'boasting'—for boasting may proceed from the source of an inner moral law as well as from an outward and ceremonial—soon receives its punishment in the degradation of the saint into the mountebank, wandering about at fairs and showing off his self-inflicted tortures as an entertaining spectacle to crowds. A humiliating mirror for spiritual pride! But is there not a western form of this moral disease, which sets up as the exclusive and idolized standard, not power of endurance indeed, but the analogous gift in western life—*activity*? After all, the self-made trial is a poor disciplinarian weapon: there is a subtle, masterly, irritant, and provoking point in the genuine natural trial, and in the natural crossness of events, which the artificial thing cannot manage: we can no more *make* our trials than we can make our feelings, and the Manichean is overthrown, the Christian is perfected, by the venom of nature.

Raised upon such a basis, Hindoo morality is a chaos—a mass of inconsistencies. The first virtues of man are those which suit his normal state; his normal state is one of health and peace, and therefore his first virtues are justice, honesty, veracity, charity: he must have, it is true—because he is not always in his normal state—other virtues, ability to endure pain, physical courage, and the like; but the former come first in order. But Hindoo law reverses this order, and turns morality topsy-turvy, makes it wholly absorbed, like the code of the savage, in the virtues of the abnormal state and the battle with pain, and bids it to neglect the plain virtues of common life, as if they were beneath notice. The result is, the

monstrous anomaly of the same people, who gape with admiration at self-torture, recoiling with horror and loathing from those who are visited by chastenings of Providence. Pain is divine if a man inflicts it on himself, diabolical if God sends it—an extraordinary reverse, indeed, to the Gospel lesson of sympathy for pain. The victim who, by means of a hook in his back, is whirled round and round a pole, is applauded rapturously by the Hindoo crowd so long as the hook remains fixed; but if the miserable creature's flesh gives way, as he is dashed, with a concussion of the brain, to the ground, he is assailed with imprecations. If the test of true morality, as of true civilisation, is *consistency*, it is flattery to compare Hindoo morals to the civilised barbarism of the Incas, with its centralization and *quipus*, marble and thatch.

The common virtues, then, have no proportionate rank in the Hindoo system, and for this there is another reason. Another test of true morality, besides consistency, is *communicativeness*; this is part of its nature; it is a proselytizing system; a good man wants to make others good. The much-criticised institution of preaching is an expedient by which the Christian body in the person of its representative exhorts itself: our literature and speeches are a preaching of society to itself. True morality is thus self-communicative, and by communicating it *sustains* itself, and keeps up the sacred flame. But Brahmanism locks up its really sublime moral truths, those high maxims and pure sentiments which our philosophers admire, in books, and the absurd and childish 'Kutha' is the only trace of preaching in it.

The Duke of Wellington observed a total unconcern in the Hindoo for two things, truth and life. The Hindoo has a facility for lying which astonishes and confounds a European. He has no regard for life: and first, not for his own life. Even this is a miserable trait; for where the moral nature is healthy, the implanted instinct of life must be strong, and nature can only become callous to it, as a limb becomes callous to pain by disease and corruption. But this insensibility is a dreadful moral stain on character, when human life at large is the subject-matter of it, and murder is incorporated into a moral code. Hindooism, by not only conniving at but acquiescing in it as the established privilege of a class, has really sanctioned Thuggee, and made itself responsible for it; and Suttee and the ghaut murders are absolute rites of Hindooism.

The question then—to come back to our old argument again—is, Is the Hindoo a *man*, endowed fundamentally with a human conscience? If he is, then there is ultimately an ap-

peal to that conscience, at which this monstrous system must tremble. Can he, for example, remain for ever blind to the law of nature, 'Thou shalt not kill?' If he cannot, he and the religion which says, Kill, must one day part. When man has been demoralised by a religion, his conscience is indeed, for that very reason, a perverted one, to which an appeal is not at once open; but its essential nature still survives, its foundation remains, on which to work a recovery.

From morals we turn to science, and first to the metaphysics of Brahmanism.

We will not, in the face of Mr. Wilson's evidence, deny the existence of good strong logical heads in the Hindoo schools, who have written good schoolbooks of logic; but what is called, *par excellence*, Hindoo speculation, does not seem to us to show strength of head. *Strength* is one thing, *depth* is another. Depth is a passive quality: it exists sometimes in children upon whom the shadows of great truths rest inertly, leading only to desultory wonder and subtle amusement: it comes out as a quality of note in a certain class of intellects, who throw interest rather than light upon philosophy. Deep ideas give a communion with truth, but not the grasp of it. There is such a thing as feeble depth, which is whirled helplessly by its own genuine and wonderful vortex. Coleridge's was a deep mind: Locke's was both a deep and a strong one. We cannot deny Hindoo speculation the attribute of depth. It broods upon all the deepest ideas connected with existence,—God, soul, the individual, the universal, the inward, the outward, infinity, eternity. Dr. Rowland Williams goes largely into this field, catches sympathetically the spirit of it, and, to use the popular term, *realizes* Brahmanism. But Brahmanism is a philosophy of deep impressions, not of active grasp over ideas—a quietist, not a hard-working philosophy. Locke examines an idea just as a chemist would a metal or fluid, and makes out what it is in this way. That is *our* notion of analysis, and of true metaphysics—accurate observation, the noting of the facts or phenomena of mind. But the Hindoo philosopher's is a barmecidal analysis, such as a man might perform in his sleep. We have a series of abstract *insides*: the outer body contains an inner, the inner personality, personality consciousness, consciousness intellect, intellect *Pracriti*. Or the abstract chain is linked thus—the intellect in each man (*prajna*) proceeds from the collective human intellect (*vaiswanara*), which proceeds from the divine creative intellect (*chaitanya*), 'which again is intelligent,' says Dr. Williams's Vedantist, 'only in virtue of that which I despair of expressing in words. It is

what we call the Fourth.' The Deity sheaths himself in successive bodies, or forms of *Maya*, till from 'the præcreative, or præeternal spirit, before all thought, and itself the possibility of thinking,' we come to the gross world of matter. 'God is the implicit universe, the universe is developed God,' and so on. There is no real analysis in all this, no observation. These are ready-made abstractions, put in a particular order. Working your way into the real facts of mind shows strength, and modern metaphysics have done this; but abstractions and subtleties are no signs in themselves of strength. There are some simple-minded people who think that all theology, and all speculation, and all metaphysics, are very difficult as such; but, setting piety aside, there are no two easier things to talk about than God and the universe. Hindoo philosophy betrays a real craving after an inner reality, of which this world is only the outside, but, with a deep sentiment pervading it: as an investigator, the Hindoo sage only uses a formula, and rings the changes upon the great ideas of our nature.

Connected with this character of Hindoo metaphysics, one important characteristic of the religion must be noted—we mean its *actus salvans*, that state of the mind which unlocks the door of heaven, and admits the individual to the life eternal. This in Christianity is faith; with the Brahmanist it is *knowledge*. The latter's idea of meditation, like that of his idea of morals, is that of an extravagant conquest of nature. He goes into the woods with a long beard, and coarse gown and girdle, determined to see through a brick wall, to penetrate into the essence of things, and the mystery of the divine nature. He rejects all media, and directs his thought to Tad: he fixes himself in the meditative vice for the rest of the present, or, if need be, throughout a second, or a third life, and awaits the issue. The issue comes at last in the shape of the great Brahman *gnosis*, the realization of Brahm as the sole-existing essence; and the illuminate cries out, 'I am Brahm.' That is the consummation of the religious life, which immediately unites the man to God, and gives him the final Hindoo salvation, absorption into the divine essence. Brahmanism has, then, for its *actus salvans* a position of mind which European metaphysics must expose as a complete sham. That science has formally shown the limits of human knowledge, and that the knowledge of God in Himself is beyond these limits. Christianity, then, however we may regret the approach in some Fathers to the adoption of a mystical *gnosis*, has, by its modesty in stopping short at faith, saved the encounter with metaphysics, while Hindooism, carried away by the bombast of a false religion, stands committed

to a plain absurdity, which mental science and common sense alike expose.

But physical science is the great antagonist of Hindooism : its inspired books are inextricably committed to a collision with the truths of astronomy, chemistry, medicine, geography, and all the facts of modern science.

The Hindoo is what we may call a running inspiration. With the Vedas as its main seat and fountain-head, the popular stream goes on from age to age without coming to any line at which it abdicates, and hands over truth to fallible reason.¹ It thus accumulates a succession of books and treatises, and, in fact, grows into a library. Lost documents of revelation are discovered in the dusty collections of temples. The late Babu Gunga Gobingha Singha, a Hindoo gentleman residing in a village near Murshedabad, spent a considerable fortune in making researches into the Shastras, and succeeded in bringing to light some valuable remains of inspiration.

Thus unchecked in its career, Hindoo inspiration, unlike the Christian, which confines itself to the great purposes of religion, undertakes all subjects ; all is fish that comes into its net ; every branch of knowledge and art, speculative or practical, from the nature of the Deity down to the art of dancing. The Shastras, or sacred writings, treat in succession upon astronomy, chronology, medicine, mechanics, metaphysics, the fine arts, geography, chemistry, botany, grammar, music, archery, &c. What such a theory of inspiration amounts to is, that age after age any treatise upon any subject that obtains reputation ranks as canonical, and makes part of a bible, which becomes simply another word for the accredited literature of the race. It is as if among ourselves, besides our standard books of divinity, and principal poets and philosophers, there had been admitted into

¹ The distinction between the Vedas and the subsequent sacred writings still leaves the basis of full inspiration for the latter. 'The Veda alone,' says the learned writer on Caste in the *Times*, 'is called "Sruti" or revelation ; everything else, however sacred, can only claim the title of "Smriti" or tradition. The most elaborate arguments have been framed by the Brahmans to establish the divine origin and the absolute authority of the Veda. They maintain that the Veda existed before all time ; that it was revealed by Brahma and seen by divine sages, who themselves were free from all the taint of humanity. For what authority, the Brahmans say, could we claim for a revelation which had been revealed by Brahma to fallible mortals ? It might have been perfect truth as seen by Brahma, but as seen by men it would have been affected by their faulty vision. Hence revelation, in order to be above all suspicion, must be handed down by inspired rishis, till at last it reaches, in its perfect form, the minds of common believers, and is accepted by them as absolute truth.'

our canon Bacon's 'Essays,' Brown's 'Religio Medici,' Evelyn's 'Diary,' Walton's 'Angler,' Selden's 'Table Talk,' White's 'Natural History of Selbourne,' Lindley Murray, Uvedale Price 'On the Picturesque,' and a list of books that we could extend indefinitely. Such a theory has the effect of giving to inspiration a familiar, domestic, and, if we may use such a term, genial character. It brings everything within the holy precincts, and around the sacred hearth, and makes all the world a temple. Its disadvantage is, that inspiration under it incurs most formidable responsibilities, for, besides physical error, the questionable morality which has issued from venerable heads looking as grave as sages and high-priests, is known to all of us, and the same rule which would have included good old Walton and Sir Thomas Browne, might also have brought Machiavelli into the canon.

It is the boast of the simple Hindoo that all science is revealed complete and perfect in his inspired books, and that nothing is left to the mere human intellect to discover. We need not go at length into these extraordinary puerilities. The chemical revelation lays down the doctrine of the five primary elements, ether, air, fire, water, and earth, each of which, in succession, produces the other. 'Fire is born of air, because, being urged with force by breath, it increases; water is born of fire, because that which when disappearing enters fire must needs when it appears flow from the same thing.' The medical revelation lays down the process of assimilation in the animal frame as threefold, turning corn into flesh, water into blood, oil into marrow; the finer part of corn supplying the mental organs, and the finer part of oil the faculty of speech: it elicits a hundred and one arteries from the heart, and places within the heart a corporeal being of the size of a thumb—the whole man in miniature, which at death escapes through an artery. The Tantras, abandoning tangible medicine altogether, regard the human stomach as a region of speculative and theological truth. Six principal internal organs, called chakras or padmas, bearing a general resemblance to the lotus, extend from the pelvic cavity to the forehead; which are respectively the seats of the influence of different divinities, and the highest of which puts the individual into proper relations with the three sacred rivers of India, the Ganges, the Jumna, and the Saraswati. Following up the same plan, they construct a grand stomachic phrenological table or chessboard, with eighty-six divisions, which represents the human interior as divided into this number of moral, intellectual, metaphysical, theological, grammatical, vocal, alphabetical, corporeal, chemical, arithmetical, social,

chronological, digestive, pathetic, and many other compartments. The compartments from nineteen to thirty-six run as follows:—‘The place of the mind, fire, the state of profound sleep, passion, the vowel u, Vishnu, false ostentation of wisdom, attention, the place of intelligence, water, Orjya, ignorance or darkness; the letter m, Shiva, false ostentation of bodily accomplishments, egotism, the place of life, the air.’ The astronomical revelation lays down a regular scale of ascending distances from the earth through the sun, moon, and planets, to the pole-star, and gives a very extraordinary explanation of the moon’s wane, and of solar and lunar eclipses; though the later Siddhantse adopt the Ptolemaic system. The geographical revelation represents the earth as consisting of seven large circular belts of land, divided from each other respectively by circular seas. At the centre of this terrestrial target is placed a round continent of land, which may be called the bull’s eye of the earth; and at the centre of this round continent rises the mountain Meru, to the height of 240,000 miles, adorned with trees and pleasant streams, the haunts of gods and celestial singers, and with a splendid mineralogy of gold and precious stones; carrying on its top the heavens of Vishnu, Siva, Indra, and other divinities, and covering with its base the seven infernal regions of Brahmanism. This whole central target is engirdled by a circular belt of gold, the golden belt is protected by a circular chain of mountains, and the mountain circle is surrounded by outer darkness. An inspired local geography represents Hindostan as 72,000 miles long from north to south, and consisting of nine divisions, the first and last of which are the abodes of gods with their retinues of heavenly musicians; and conducts the Ganges, after its journey through the habitations of men, through regions of celestial songsters, terrific giants and demons, gigantic snakes, and successive haunts of unknown and supernatural tribes and species, alternately beautiful and appalling.

It is difficult to separate one element from another in this mixed, heterogeneous mass of fairy tale, allegory, and physics: it contains however, mixed with other matter, the rude science of the early East, which science was gradually adopted as revelation, for which revelation Hindooism is accordingly now responsible. We naturally ask, indeed, how an ancient Brahman could profess to discover by thought the truths of geography: the earth’s surface is a fact which can only be got at by observation; its mountains, rivers, seas, races of men, and species of animals are matters of ocular evidence, of which the most profound meditation in the deepest cavern of the earth cannot put

you in possession. But to ask such questions as these is not to realise the dream which constitutes oriental thought. In dreams the intellect is magnetised : we ask no questions ; we are disturbed by no inconsistencies ; we confound place and time, bring the living and the dead together, and see the dome of St. Paul's from the banks of the Nile. The popular oriental reason succumbs to the fascination of solemn externals as the guarantees of truth : it reposes in the ceremonial of wisdom. A grave countenance, a venerable beard, a priestly costume, are the tests of a correct and capable informant, nor does it advance beyond the spectacle or rite of knowledge. Its ideas of matter of fact itself are vague. The region of fact is altogether an heraldic and mystical world to an imagination overpowered by the spell of a whole ritualistic scene, in which temples, incantations, sacrifices, sacred oxen, sacred rivers, sacred trees, sacred men, and sacred suns and moons, make up a waking dream, and convert life into a solemn show, which soothes into quietism and a quasi-holy lethargy and torpor. Geography is especially a dream amongst rude people, mingling with the supernatural as soon as it leaves the familiar confines of a district. The primitive imagination pictures the earth's surface extending onward and onward, till, by the pure mystery of surpassing distance and remoteness, a change takes place, new laws of nature steal in, new forms of life appear, the mountains are the abodes of gods, the woods of satyrs, the valleys and ravines communicate with a subterranean world ; a dark river is crossed, and you are in the realms of the dead, the spectres glide peacefully along verdant avenues, or cower in murky hollows under instruments of torture. The same Homer who enlarged the bounds of literal geography yet abounds in the mystical, and lands Ulysses and his companions by a natural voyage over a natural sea upon the twilight of the Cimmerians and the region of departed spirits. The Fortunate Islands, the Homeric Ogygia, the garden of the Hesperides, were all oases of the supernatural or immortal life, boldly lodged within this world, not timidly relegated to another. So the sidereal world above us, which is but an extension of our own physical space, figures to this day as the region of the life supernatural, in the idea of a mistaken piety which cannot wholly separate the visible and the invisible. Thus, by an assimilating process peculiar to the primitive kind of intellect, the natural world glides into the supernatural and mingles with it. Under the jealous eye of philosophy, indeed, a certain resemblance of this process goes on : this actual time in which we live and this actual space in which we stand, with its numbered stellar orbs, run up into regions of insoluble enigma, where

monsters of metaphysics reside, transcending all the centaurs, sphinxes, and dragons of fable; time which never began, universal space which is not a *whole*, and number which is neither even nor odd—the nondescript forms of infinity. But the monsters of philosophy are always inaccessible, those of mystical geography are seen and conversed with.

To sum up now what has been said. Here is a succession of truths which appeal directly to the rational nature in man, which Hindooism contradicts; there are truths of religion, the worship of one God, and the doctrine of a personal immortality; there are truths of morals; there are truths of metaphysics; there are, lastly, the undeniable truths of physical science, and the plain facts of nature. Here is a combination of forces, then, which as soon as ever the Hindoo mind has risen up to the natural human level, and has had the proper facts laid before it, is ready at once to close in upon the system, and crush it completely and finally. There cannot be the slightest doubt as to the effect which will follow from these truths being apprehended; and the question whether the Hindoo mind will ever be brought to apprehend them, *i. e.* whether the original type of rational humanity in the Hindoo is practically accessible, is a question of our own resources and of the natural course of events.

The question of our resources for this purpose involves as its principal element the question of education.

The prominent controversy which the field of Indian education presents up to the year 1835, is that between the advocates of the vernacular and the English learning. The Mahometan college at Calcutta, the Sanscrit College at Benares, and the mixed Mahometan and Sanscrit Colleges at Agra and Delhi, represented the former principle, and the support of it by the government; while the erection of the Hindoo College, an institution of private foundation at Calcutta, showed a strong movement in Indian public opinion toward the latter. The celebrated resolution of Lord William Bentinck in 1835, in which Mr. Macaulay concurred, decided the balance in favour of the European learning. Another important question, *viz.*, that of language, whether the English or the vernacular were to be used as the medium for communicating this new knowledge, was also decided by the same resolution. The vernacular was a rather unmanageable medium for reflecting European ideas and facts: the recourse to the Sanscrit hardly mended matters. It was not surprising 'if a very bad translation of the "Life of Columbus," full of barbarisms, and full of obsolete terms of Sanscrit, did not sell:'¹ in addition to which defects the translation

¹ We quote here and elsewhere from the evidence before the Committee of the Lords.

was expensive, while the English book was cheap. English was on these grounds adopted as the medium of European learning in India, in the higher class of schools, and 15,000 Hindoos were receiving an English education in the valley of the Ganges in 1853. The necessity of the vernacular for the education of the mass was at the same time recognised; and it was felt that if European knowledge was ever to spread generally in India, it must be through the native language. European knowledge has been introduced into the lower class of schools by means of new vernacular school-books composed by pupils of the English schools. A vernacular 'Robinson Crusoe' is said to be a great favourite with Hindoo peasants, and 'a rage for translation,' Mr. Wilson tells us, has introduced Mill's 'Political Economy,' Bentham's 'Principles of Legislation,' Paley's 'Natural Theology,' Marshman's 'Scenes of History,' with many other books to the cultivated Hindoos, and has furnished them with the 'Encyclopædia Bengalensis.'

When we come to the working of this system of education, remarkable results appear with considerable drawbacks upon them. The Hindoo is a quick learner, and has a great facility for acquiring language; the perfection of his English pronunciation astonishes you; he writes English well; he catches up quickly European ideas, and pursues mathematics, metaphysics, and astronomy keenly. Lord Ellenborough is much amused at young Hindoos 'spouting Shakspeare,' and the school examinations exhibit a good deal for an Englishman to laugh at. If the glibness, however, with which the pupils at these scholastic celebrations define 'capital,' estimate 'paper money,' and prove the 'origin of wealth,' 'the beneficial effects of the division of labour,' 'the consequences of a free trade in corn,' 'the advantages of accumulation,' and 'the influence produced on wages by the relation of capital to the population;' if the facility with which they 'analyse' Locke and Hume, 'criticise' Brown's 'Theory of Causation,' correct the Platonists and Peripatetics, and 'expose' Descartes, Malebranche, and Leibnitz; if these philosophical triumphs have their ludicrous aspect, part of the effect, perhaps, is due to the overforward zeal of the missionary schoolmaster, who is bent on producing striking results, and aims at creating a perfect Bengalese Scotch philosopher in three years. The enthusiasm and practical powers of Dr. Duff merit the highest admiration, but he must expect Englishmen to stumble at such questions as these, proposed to copper-tinted youths of the age of fourteen or fifteen—'Define the true philosophic spirit,' 'In what two lights are we to regard the mental affections,' 'State how the philosophy of mind agrees with that of matter,' 'Define what is meant by the relation of

mental equivalence,' with others which would make our list tedious. Part of the effect, perhaps, is due to the law by which an element of the ludicrous always somehow or other mixes with the practical part of great movements. Theory can evade, and history can forget or overlook; but take the actual present working of any great cause, as it goes on before our eyes, and it is sure to contain a good deal of the ridiculous. The practical, the actual, are severe tests. It matters not what the cause is, whether it is Parliamentary Reform, or Catholic Emancipation, or the Corn Laws, or the English Church, or the Universal Church, or the evangelization of the world, or anything else, every cause incorporates an element of the ludicrous in its practical working and machinery of means to ends. This comedy of education in India does unquestionably—and that is a serious result—revolutionize the Hindoo, so far as he is brought under the process. He does not shrink from the logical result of new truths, and, from the instant that he comes into contact with them, abandons his old faith once and for all. This is the uniform result. Dr. Duff describes graphically the first effects of the new education upon a large body of Hindoo youth in Calcutta; their utter amazement and wild holiday sense of boundless mental liberty, 'on being suddenly thrown adrift from their ancient and natural ideas, and completely tossed from the moorings and the anchorages of old Hindooism.'

All this, in spite of extravagances, is satisfactory, as showing a certain European foundation in the Hindoo mind, that it is not a mere local offspring of the obsolete East, but the true mind of man, capable of modern sympathies, and susceptible of all those sensations which attach to new ideas and the discovery of truth, and even of the excitement of the European revolutionary sentiment, which, however dangerous a one among ourselves, is not wholly unwelcome in a Hindoo, as a sign of his participation in true human nature. On the other hand, we hear complaints that the educated Hindoos do not keep up their education when they go into life. Out of 2,000 educated natives in Calcutta, only 130, Mr. Marshman says, took in English newspapers, and only 12 English periodicals; though this statement should be qualified by the information that native reading-clubs and circulating libraries have of late risen up in Calcutta. What keeps up education is society; and when the Hindoo leaves school he does not find an educated native society to receive him, and does not venture upon English. Even the Parsee holds back. 'I tried to persuade,' says Sir Erskine Perry, 'Sir Jamsetjee Jeejeeboy to come and dine with

me, and to bring his own cook, but it was too much for a man of his years to encounter. I have no doubt that as the elders go off, his son, a man of forty, and others of his generation will do it.'

The inertia of the Oriental mass thus necessarily retards the growth of the European element thrown back upon it. Nor should it be forgotten that the blind faith of the poor ignorant multitude, however intellectually despised, yet exerts an unconscious pressure upon the imagination of the Europeanised Hindoo: this huge body of ancestral belief everywhere confronts and encompasses him. He is not convinced back again by it; but such a state of things has a tendency, as we have seen in Roman Catholic Europe, to produce that neutral attitude which rejects one form of religion without adopting another. The ignorant mass thus exercises a real power even over the educated.

Enormous retarding influences, however, are no more than what the springs of the greatest movements, the most powerful and effective causes of grand revolutions, have been originally saddled with. The obstructive force is always strong and obstinate up to the point at which the assailant cause turns the corner; but in proportion as the assailing cause gains ground, it also absorbs the obstruction. Whatever drawbacks may accompany it, education, with an active European influence to back it up, is a most powerful engine for revolutionising the Hindoo mind. Christianity can wield the weapon of science for the demolition of her rival in India, without any fear of a recoil upon herself. Her religious military position gives her this advantage. Some may be disposed to deny her right to such a position, but as a matter of fact it is one which she makes good. Whatever apparent opposition there may be between certain passages of the Bible and truths of physical science, Christians, as a matter of fact, do not cease to believe in their revelation, on account of the difficulty: Hindoos do immediately and finally reject *theirs*. Christianity, then, bears the appeal to physical science, Hindooism does not; and thus strong against the recoil, Christianity can wield effectively the weapon. The only question is as to the moral rules which attach to the use of this weapon; what restrictions accompany it; what is the constitutional use of it. On this subject many scruples are felt by reflecting and religious men, and we find ourselves introduced to the agitated question of the secular system of education in India.

Before we suggest any materials, however, for the decision of this question, it may be as well to take the precaution to state what the question itself is, and to define it with proper accuracy.

This question is often generally and vaguely described as that of religious education *versus* secular, a phrase which would lead us to imagine that one side maintained that education in India was better without religion, the other, that it was better with it. But this is an incorrect statement of the case. Both sides, we apprehend, allow that all education in India would be better in itself with the religious element than without it: the difference is, that one side maintains the existence of insurmountable impediments to the introduction of the religious element in certain connexions. This is a dispute which only relates to a certain class of schools in India, viz., the government schools: the question is not raised with respect to missionary schools, or any educational institutions supported by private charity, but only with respect to those in connexion with government. It is maintained, in the first place, that government is an improper agent for purposes of religion; that representing, as it does, a religiously-divided nation, its attitude on this subject is essentially neutral, and that it could not teach any one definite creed. It is maintained, in the next place, that government could not assume the character of religious instructor in India without great danger to the safety of our empire; that proselytism would be incorporated by such a step in our civil system; and that, however mild a form of proselytism it might in actual working be, only offering certain instruction, and leaving it entirely at the option of the native to receive or refuse it as he liked, it would, as connected with the government, suggest to the Hindoo the suspicion of overpowering influence and force, and thus perpetually stimulate native fear and agitation. On these grounds it is maintained that the religious element must be excluded from the government schools, and that they must confine themselves to secular education.

With the recent exception of Sir John Lawrence, the unanimous consent of Indian statesmen of all parties decides upon these grounds against the introduction of religion into the government schools. Assuming then, upon the strength of their concurrent testimony to a state of facts of which they are the proper judges, the existence of insurmountable obstacles to this step, the question is, Ought government to shut up its schools altogether, or is it justified in carrying on, and, as may seem expedient, in extending a system of simply secular education in India? The effect of this education is doubtless to demolish Hindooism. What is said, then, is, that you have no right to take away one religion without teaching another.

Now, were there no other teaching or influence at work in India, except that of government schools, there would doubtless

be something in this argument, and the policy of demolishing without any attempt to build up again would be highly objectionable. But this is not the case. The Gospel is preached in India. Christianity is offered to the Hindoo, if not in the government schoolroom, at any rate in institutions founded side by side with the government school, and by the same people who, in their national character, erect the government school. The Hindoos know that a revelation professing to come from heaven claims their belief: some actually go to hear what the missionary says about this revelation, others know that they can go if they like. With this general invitation to the Hindoos to hear the Gospel, which has its own institutions to support it, it cannot fairly be said that we are demolishing Hindooism without offering a substitute, simply because this substitute is not expressly offered in *every* institution connected with education. Taking one institution with another, and looking upon our teaching in India as a whole, we teach both science and religion; and schools which give a sound secular education are not fairly chargeable with an irreligious character, when they exist in juxtaposition with missionary and evangelizing labours and institutions going on side by side with them.

In the next place, whatever responsibility the government schools incur, as giving knowledge which may simply lead to infidelity, is incurred substantially by the missionary English school as well. It is true that Dr. Duff teaches the Bible, and all the articles of the Christian faith in his school, and that young Hindoos who still nominally worship Vishnu and Siva give accurate answers at the public examinations to the questions, 'How may it be said that faith saves a sinner?' 'What is the difference between justification and sanctification?' But can he insure the Hindoo ever believing one tittle of that revelation which he is thus made to get off by heart? Out of a school which had been going on for twenty-two years, and which had gradually raised its average attendance to 1,380, only 40, he tells us, had been baptized. But while the conversion of his pupils by this religious knowledge is a mere contingency, the demolition of their Hindoo faith by the secular knowledge which he gives them, is, according to his own showing, certain. He teaches geography, astronomy, and all the branches of modern science; but he tells us that 'you cannot teach true geography and astronomy without exploding the false Hindoo systems,' which systems 'are contained in books inspired by the gods, and which are, therefore, of divine infallible authority.' He teaches, then, what is certain to make infidels of them, as regards their own religion, while he can

only secure a very small fraction of them accepting the proper substitute for it. These young Hindoos 'are mastering,' he says, 'the subject of Christianity, as far as the human intellect, apart from divine grace, can master it, much in the same way as they come there to master geography or astronomy.' It is plain that the responsibility, whatever it may be, of the certain destruction of their old belief is very little relieved by the mere accompaniment of such religious instruction as this, which is, in the nature of the case, received by the Hindoo pupil at the time as so much mere historical or psychological information. Dr. Duff, who speaks of the general body of pupils whom the government schools turn out as simply infidels, regards the unconverted mass which issues out of his own in a more sanguine light. 'Many others (*i. e.* those who are not converted) do become *intellectually* Christians, and are therefore brought into a condition very much the same as that of the great bulk of intelligent Christians in this country, who are Christians in head or intellect, but not in heart.' But is this more than a favourable mode of representing the same real result as that which takes place under the government school system, viz., the production of a certain quantity of loose belief? And is not this difference between the unconverted of Dr. Duff's, and the unconverted of the government school, owing a great deal to the spectacles through which the two are seen? 'Before I left Calcutta,' says Sir Charles Trevelyan, 'I had a list made of all the converts to Christianity from the educated class, and I found that at that time the majority of that class of converts whose character, cultivation, and strength of mind offer the best assistance to Christianity, were from the Hindoo [government] college;' while in point of number of conversions the evidence establishes a nearly equal result under both plans. Dr. Duff admits an improvement 'in the working of the non-Christian system,' which he attributes to the circumstance 'that the young men brought up in the government colleges are coming more or less into contact with the other class of young men' who have been brought up 'under Christian influence,' *i. e.* in Dr. Duff's schools. The admission is valuable, as showing, at any rate, what we just now said, that the secular system of education in India is not to be judged of as if it was our only mode of approaching the Hindoo mind, but must be considered in connection with the existence of missionary efforts going on side by side with it.

The truth is, this responsibility, whatever it may be, must be faced in India, if we are to make anything of the Hindoo or of India; because the Hindoo must be *taught*. The missionary is in a position to teach him both physical truth and religion.

The government, not being in a position to teach him religion, is still under the obligation to teach him physical truth, because this is plainly something which he ought to know. He ought to know something about where he is, and what he is; something about this earth on which he stands, and the sun, moon, and stars above him; something about his own body, and something about the race of man to which he belongs. If you cannot go one step in this world of simple fact without demolishing his Shastras, that is not your fault; you have a right, and it is your duty to teach him what he ought to know. The mere knowledge is proper for him; it is the knowledge of the divine creation, of its system and laws, of the earth and its inhabitants; he is a child without this; it is what man as man ought to have: the call to give it him is imperative. We do not say that every individual Hindoo, any more than every individual Briton, ought to know geography or history, still less astronomy or anatomy; but the *society* ought to have the knowledge. But the knowledge is also positively necessary for the improvement of the physical condition of the people, and for the development of the resources of India.

This responsibility being unavoidable, then, it is consolatory to know that it is not so hazardous a one as it is sometimes represented to be; that is to say, that even simple infidelity, should that unhappily be the result of new knowledge, is by no means a certain and clear disadvantage as compared with Hindoo faith. Infidelity takes its colour from the religion from which it is a departure: it is a clear loss as a departure from the true religion, but as a departure from a false and gross superstition it must be estimated differently. We hear of Hindoos becoming infidels, and we immediately connect them with all the associations of European infidelity, and put them on the same level with apostates from Christianity; but we should remember that they are infidels without being apostates. They have left a miserable religion, which taught false gods and bad morals: is there anything to lament simply in that fact? Certainly not: it might indeed be allowed that if, in abandoning a false religion, the unconverted Hindoo fell back upon simple atheism and a total rejection of the religious principle in every shape, in that case the exchange would be for the worse; because any religious tie, any hold upon the conscience of however low a kind, is better than absolutely none. But does it at all follow that a man who abandons a false religion, even though he does not accept the true one, throws himself upon this extreme and desperate alternative? By no means: so far as he has gone he has done nothing to show such a disposition; he has simply acted according

to the laws of reason and conscience; he has submitted to the plain evidence of facts, and given up a creed which did not stand the test of that evidence. The state of mind, then, out of which the change has come being a reasonable and proper one, why should we suppose that the result should be desperate? It will be said, perhaps, that those who leave a false religion, and do not join the true, must gradually, even though they are not prepared for it at the time, fall into this desperate condition, simply from want of a religion to keep them up: but is it true that there is this absolute vacuum in the mean time—this complete absence of religion of any kind? A man who leaves a false religion upon proper grounds of evidence, not having done anything to blind his reason or conscience, naturally falls back, in the failure of his old religious ground, upon the evidences of natural religion, internal and external, contained in the material world around him and in his own conscience. He becomes what we call a Deist—only a Deist, we must remember, from being a believer in a false revelation, not from being a believer in the true one. Is natural religion in the place of Hindooism a change for the worse? We should be sorry to say that it was, especially as this very Hindooism is a corruption of natural religion. It will be said that this modern natural religion is not like the patriarchal which preceded revelation—that it stands aloof from revelation given. Doubtless there is a difference; but it may be inferior to patriarchal religion, and yet much superior to Hindooism. It must be remembered that the act of rejecting a false religion upon proper grounds leaves not only reason and conscience, but the principle of *faith* fundamentally existing in the character, no improper process having gone on in the mind to destroy it; and though there is doubtless a great defect in the use, exertion, and improvement of this natural faith, where it does not lead, as it ought to do, to the acceptance of the Gospel, it may still imply a real belief in important truths: for example, the existence of a God, a future life, and the essential distinction between virtue and vice; as being which and no more, without superstitious alloy, it may be not only equal, but much superior, to Hindooism.

And facts bear out this aspect of the case: the evidence decidedly preponderates on the side of the Hindoo being morally improved by the abandonment of his religion, even though he does not accept Christianity. ‘Those young men who received an English education,’ says Sir C. Trevelyan, ‘are notoriously more truthful than the natives in general. Everybody who knows them will say so. In my time they were fervent admirers of truth and virtue in the abstract. Their moral state seems very

similar to that of the most enlightened of ancient days.' 'As to moral principles, as to truth-telling,' says Sir Erskine Perry, 'they are far superior to the former class of officials that we had to deal with. I should say they are Deists, and sincere Deists too, many of them.' Mr. Norton says that education 'has greatly improved and elevated their moral feelings,' and in particular thinks that 'it has given a higher appreciation of the obligation of truth.' Mr. Bird says, 'they conduct themselves extremely well as public officers.' Mr. Wilson distrusts the *intellectual* results of the English schools. 'I do not think that they (the pupils) make such good reasoners that they would understand an argument or discussion, or would investigate the merits of a judicial case so well, or at any rate not better than a pupil of the Madressa or Sanscrit college.' But he has no doubt as to *moral* results: 'I think that those who have been employed in the judicial departments as Sudder Amins, or as deputy collectors, are a better class of men, morally speaking, than we get from the native colleges.' Mr. Keane, the association secretary of the Church Missionary Society, after generalising strongly against secular education, is brought to the point by Lord Stanley of Alderley, and to the question, 'Is it your opinion that education, unaccompanied with instruction in the truths of Christianity, is an unmixed evil to the natives of India?' answers 'No; because our English education is mixed with Christianity. You cannot wholly take Christianity out of an English education, and therefore there is a great deal of Christianity, though the government pretend to say they teach none. I believe they teach a good deal; and it is that which gives us great encouragement with regard to the results of this system of English education in India.' 'As to truthfulness,' says Dr. Duff, 'there is no question that some of those who have acquired merely a secular education have shown a higher sense of honour in that respect.'

Secular education, then, in India, while its infallible effect is disbelief in Hindooism, cannot, as an engine in the hands of Christians, be for an instant compared with that policy which has been ascribed to the Jesuits, which instilled infidelity in order that the victim might in sheer despair take refuge in Rome. The Jesuit, in the first place, insinuates gratuitous doubts for the mere purpose of producing infidelity: we give a necessary knowledge which we are obliged, in simple consideration of the intellectual, moral, and physical welfare of the Hindoo, to give, which happens, without our seeking it, to involve this advantageous peril to his old faith. The Jesuit, again, risks the pupil's fall into monstrous error—such error as he himself would

acknowledge to be much worse than his present one—for the chance of his pupil's attaining a higher truth. We risk no such fall, because here there is no common faith, but only a false religion to leave.

In this state of the case, then, we are furnished with an engine, which we have a full right to use, for the complete, however gradual, demolition of Hindooism—an engine of which, so far as it is brought into use and action at all, this is the natural inevitable working; and upon the demolition of Hindooism it stands to reason that Christianity must more or less succeed in its place. Whatever may be the time required for this education to penetrate into the enormous inert Hindoo mass, and whatever struggles may, in the mean time, arise between the educated and uneducated elements in that mass—struggles in which ignorant brute number may for a long time, we know not how long, completely prevail over the enlightened few—still the rule must work, that as education spreads Hindooism goes, and that in some large ratio, as one religion goes out, another must come in. 'My first position,' says Sir C. Trevelyan, 'is, that even supposing them [the educated Hindoos] to remain in that middle state, still they are far superior to what they were; but they cannot remain in that state. The human being requires the comforts and hopes of a religion: he cannot do without them; and Hindoos are even less able to do without them than some western nations that are made of a sterner and more self-relying stuff. These natives must have some religion: they cannot go back to Hindooism; they will not turn aside to Mahometanism; they must, therefore, go on to Christianity.' Dr. Duff and the missionaries proclaim in the same way the important part which physical science is to play in the cause of Indian conversion—that Hindooism must be demolished by it sooner or later; and that Christianity must succeed Hindooism.

'The old story over again,' we are prepared to hear some readers say; 'you will create by this education a school of infidels, and will not be able to touch the ignorance of the mass, which will go on as devoutly Hindoo as ever.' The history of modern Europe to a certain extent favours this picture, exhibiting, as it does, infidel sections that have thrown off the popular belief on the one side, and a superstitious untouched popular mass on the other. But there is a wide difference between the two cases. Romanism is in no collision with the plain common truths of material nature, nor is there anything to prevent the most educated scientific man from being a Romanist. But Hindooism is in direct collision with this class of truths, and is

therefore exposed by a test which is intelligible to everybody. Admitting, then, that so long as education in India is confined to a small section, such section may remain mainly a school of Deists, its further advance, its spread over any fair amount of ground, must alter this sectional result. A group, a knot, a school, a section of men may be Deists, but no nation, no mass of men, can be. The experiment of a Deistical nation was tried at the end of the last century in France, and quite broke down. Imagine, then, any considerable portion of the Hindoo population gaining in the same way that society does here, from school-books or by a general understanding with its scientific section, a knowledge of the broad truths of nature, and, consequently, of the falsity of Hindooism; what becomes of it? Can we imagine a large Deistical population in India? We hardly can, such a fact is so wholly without precedent; and if we cannot do this, the only other reasonable alternative is the spread of Christianity.

We are, then, committed by our position in India to a course of policy, which, without aiming at all directly at it, does, in fact, tend to a most important religious result. For we must educate the Hindoos. That is our clear duty, which we cannot avoid, if it is only because the physical and social improvement of the people, and the whole development of the resources of India depend upon it. It is quite impossible that the handful of English in India can undertake to do all that is wanted in the way of drainage, irrigation, surveying, engineering, building, for the whole of India. Good medicine and surgery are one of the first requisites for physical welfare: we cannot undertake to physic the whole population, or set all the broken arms or legs of India. If all this work is to be done, it must be by the natives themselves taught by us—by native engineers, architects, surveyors, surgeons, all over India, standing after the first start upon their own basis, and handing on their professions to natural successors. But this domiciliation of modern science and the useful arts in India can only be brought about by extensive education. There is then, independently of all the claims of knowledge on its own account, a natural call for education in India in the physical and social wants of the people—a call which must both expand the area of education and also tighten the grasp of education upon the Hindoo mind. The complaint is now that the Hindoo does not keep up his knowledge after he has left school; but the same able witnesses, including Mr. Marshman, who observe this, also attribute the effect, in a great degree, to the want of that natural stimulus which professional occupation gives to sustaining knowledge.

Give this stimulus, and education will keep up itself; and the physical wants of India, all agree, cry aloud for those lines of native professional employment which will supply this stimulus. 'Would there be any difficulty,' asks Lord Monteagle and Brandon, 'in natives obtaining employment in India, if they had acquired a practical knowledge of engineering, and were able to take levels, and lay out drainages, and assist in irrigation?' Mr. Norton replies, 'They would be coveted on all sides; swarms of them would be employed.' 'It is impossible,' says Sir C. Trevelyan, 'to develop the resources of India unless we call the natives to our assistance; there is a very great demand for native engineers.' 'The demand for skilled and educated natives is increasing,' says Dr. Wise; 'they would be absorbed in the labour market of the country.' Native youths have, at the instance of the late Mr. Thomason in the North-Western Provinces, and Colonel Napier in the Punjaub, received an engineering education under English officers, and have been employed on the roads, bridges, canals, and surveys of those districts. When the experiment was first tried of a medical education, it was thought that the goat would have to furnish the only access to an Hindoo's knowledge of anatomy; but Dr. Chuckerbutty's degrees at our colleges of physicians and surgeons are unanswerable tests of a larger acquaintance with the subject; and though Europeans cannot be brought to accept their services, we are informed that 'natives have become good anatomists, expert surgeons, and sagacious practitioners, and that many of them are employed with great advantage in the large cities.'

It will be said, perhaps, that all this is only professional education; but mere professional education, must, as involving science, demolish Hindooism; and, moreover, you cannot separate one part of education from another. Here is a quantity of knowledge all got from a European source; it must bring in with it European ideas.

From the main subject of secular education in India we turn to a collateral question of policy connected with it. After much consideration, we are not disposed to find great fault with the policy announced in Lord Stanley's reply to the deputation of the Religious Societies; that viz., of government not connecting itself at all with the missionary schools. Highly as we should appreciate the advantage of the grant in aid in itself, we doubt whether it would not be more than counterbalanced in the long run by the difficulty which it might throw in the way of clear and secure relations between the English Government and the native population. We do not question the abstract right of

the government to give grants in aid to missionary schools, nor do we see that the support of a system of voluntary conversion would be any *aggression* upon the native religion, which is all that our understanding or compact with the native population binds us to refrain from. This is simply a question of expediency; but on this ground we incline to Lord Stanley's alternative.

Christianity is playing a long game in India; and for playing out this game, the permanence of the English empire is practically necessary. By 'practically necessary' we do not mean to say that the Gospel could not possibly win its way in India without the shelter of our government; but only that with the fall of our government in India would be lost the principal apparent engine which Christianity has for the demolition of Hindooism. There would go that whole revolutionising movement which has been just described, which depends on British shelter for its advance; there would go civilised Europe's main access to the Hindoo. For this reason, then, the permanence of our empire in India, is—short of points of conscience which are not involved in the present question, which is only one of Christian expediency—our first consideration.

On the subject of the permanence of our Indian empire we have two schools of Indian statesmen: one of these directly contemplates its termination, and regards us as only holding India for a time, however indefinite, till the natives are able to govern themselves; the other does not contemplate any termination of it. These two schools differ on two great practical questions, bearing upon this important point of our stay in India. One of these is education. The former advocates zealously upon the philanthropic ground native education, and is prepared to take the consequence of it when it has raised the Hindoos to the self-governing level; the latter is jealous of modern education for the Hindoo, on the professed double ground of its inutility on account of his unfitness for it, and of its revolutionary tendency, as inflating him with empty conceit and disposing him to kick at our rule. Lord Ellenborough's letter of last April, and Sir George Clerk's memorandum, which he endorses, represent the opinions of this school on this point.

On this question, then, we differ, as our whole line of argument has shown, from what is called the old Indian school. The unfitness of the Hindoo for *modern*, i. e., *good* education, that instruction in natural and historical truth which is the inalienable heritage of the human mind appearing to us a mere assumption, we do not see how, as rulers of India, we can

possibly evade the plain duty of improving, as far as we can, both the intellectual and also the physical and social conditions of the Hindoo, for all which ends education is absolutely necessary. If we cannot develop the resources of the country without this instrument, that is in itself an imperative call for the use of it. The gravity and temperate tone of Lord Ellenborough's letter disguise his fundamental jealousy skilfully; but we cannot mistake the operation of such a rule as this—that 'it ought to be made quite clear to the people that our government does not desire to assist in the education of a single child not brought to the school with the full voluntary *unsolicited* consent of its parents.' To throw upon the Hindoo the whole initiative in a process of which the issue can alone show the true value, would, to say the least of it, be a gratuitous shackle upon education in India, and one which would come rather unsuitably from us as the natural movers and originators in Indian improvement. And though we acquiesce in the principle that 'education and civilisation should descend from the higher to the inferior classes,' i. e., though we prefer this order of things abstractedly, we cannot but remark that Lord Ellenborough has himself introduced his recommendation 'to diffuse education by endeavouring to give it to the higher classes *first*; by founding colleges to which the higher classes alone would be admitted,' with the preliminary information that 'there is throughout India, especially *among the higher classes*, a strong prejudice in favour of *domestic* education.' It would hardly be difficult to conjecture how school education, confined expressly to classes who have the 'strongest prejudice in favour of domestic education,' would advance under the patronage of the rule which forbids all 'solicitation' of the trial of the new plan. Philanthropy is too strong in this country to allow of such restrictions as these, and the necessities of the case require a broader use of the instrument of education, one not so much based upon rule, but left more to itself, to work itself out as it can. We cannot expect to be able to conduct the great work of education in India exactly upon the principle which we should select in our own rooms, upon any best plan or theory whatever: it will be a rough hand-to-hand work, done as it can be. But we cannot leave it undone, we must do it as circumstances enable us, and done any how it cannot fail of important results.

On another point of policy, however, which is discussed in connection with the question of the permanence of our Indian empire, we cannot think so entirely with the Indian philanthropical school. What this point is, will appear from three or four brief extracts from some quiet passages at arms

between Lord Ellenborough and Sir Charles Trevelyan in the Lords' Committee on India.

' Lord Ellenborough—Do you contemplate ultimately the almost entire suppression of Europeans in the judicial and revenue departments?'

' Sir C. Trevelyan—I conceive that will be the final result.'

' Lord Ellenborough—Would there not be another end at the same time? viz. the end of our dominion, or at least of the utility of it?'—Second Report, p. 146.

Again—

' Sir C. Trevelyan — If the connexion ceases according to the new system, we shall leave a grateful country, and a highly improved country.'

' Lord Ellenborough—Why should we ever leave it at all?'—P. 171.

Again—

' Sir C. Trevelyan — Supposing the connection to cease, our trade with India would probably be more advantageous to us than our direct political connection.'

' Lord Ellenborough—Do you estimate as of no value the maintenance from the revenues of India of 6,000 English gentlemen in situations of trust and great importance, and the maintenance of some 1,500 more in this country upon the fruits of their services in the East, besides the maintenance of about 40,000 of our troops employed in that service?'—P. 172.

Again—

' Sir C. Trevelyan — I will read a passage from Gibbon: "When Alexander became master of the Persian empire, he early perceived that with all the power of his hereditary dominions . . . he could not hope to retain in his subjection territories so extensive and populous; that to render his authority secure and permanent . . . all distinctions between the victors and vanquished must be abolished, &c."'

' Lord Ellenborough—Is there any power in our government to marry at once every officer above the rank of captain, and every civilian of two years' standing, to native ladies of great character and high birth, which was the policy adopted by Alexander?'—P. 174.

Regarding, as we do, the permanence of our Indian empire simply in connection with the interests of Christianity, and as most important for those interests, we cannot wholly acquiesce in an administrative generosity, which would thus entirely remove Europeans from the great official area of India. This substitution is doubtless only intended to take place when an educated class of natives has risen up large enough to afford a basis of selection, and therefore is still looked upon, even by its advocates, as comparatively distant: still a system of education working under such a stimulus as this, might easily create an educated native class large enough for this purpose, long before the country at large had been at all penetrated by European

knowledge; and we might thus be virtually abdicating before we had made the least impression upon the main body of Hindoos. The presence of some more English than the Governor-General and a group of principal officials is necessary to maintain English power in India. Bengal and Bahar alone employ 45,000 natives, receiving an aggregate salary of 572,000*l.*; how far we can safely continue our present comparative monopoly of the *higher* posts and salaries, without danger from native jealousy, is a question for Indian witnesses to settle. We may observe, however, that this substitution is put, in fact, more upon philanthropic than upon politic grounds; that as rulers of India we have the right to fill these offices, if we are ready to submit to the condition of expatriation appended to them; that the time must be incalculably distant when a large English official body will cease to be wanted for India; and that the interests of Christianity, so far as the course of events points out, evidently chime in with this arrangement, which is identical with a practical maintenance of English power.

It is on this ground, then, that we are inclined, on the whole, not to quarrel with Lord Stanley's decision. Of the permanence of our Indian empire, secure relations between our government and the native population are the first condition. When government, then, can take the clear ground of saying that it has nothing to do with proselytising, is it worth while to disturb that ground and with it those relations, for the advantage of a pecuniary grant? It must be remembered that these schools, however large a part of the education they give may be secular, are substantially proselytising schools, and that secular education is avowedly given there only as a bribe and a bait to catch the Hindoo for the purpose of conversion. However suitable such a policy, therefore, may be to the missionary, the school is, as a matter of fact, a proselytising school, and a government grant to it makes the government a virtual partner in a scheme of proselytising. Is the advantage of the grant worth the difficulty which it entails? That is the question. However narrowly jealous a guardian of our political interests in India, common sense goes with Lord Ellenborough when he says that 'the apprehension of religious designs on the part of the government must have had something to do with the late rebellion;' that 'no cause of inferior power could have produced so great a revolution in the native mind.' We have had enough of risk then: let us run no more risks than we can help; that is to say, let us not run one single risk more than our position as rulers of India imposes on us. A civilised government is bound, as such, to improve the social and

physical condition of the Hindoos; but not, as such, to proselytise. It is true a religious issue, and an important one, attaches even to a physical and social movement in India; but this ultimate issue is not a very manageable weapon for the mutineer; as distant, it is not tangible enough for his alarmist cry, as near it shows a movement which has gone too far for him, and already won the intelligent and powerful classes over to its side. Such a movement, indeed, is self-protective, the issue may be foreseen by both sides, but it goes on by a law of its own, strong in human reason, and even in human selfishness; and the Brahman who is clear-headed enough to predict the result can only stand by as an idle prophet, unable to help himself, or to hinder the natural operation of the rule that man accepts his own physical good when it is offered him.¹

We cannot conclude a sketch of the prospects of Christianity in India without a slight notice of that iron institution which has upset the faith of so many in the possibility of Hindoo conversion—the formidable institution of caste. It is now just fifty years since Sydney Smith in the ‘Edinburgh Review’ thus described the operation of caste—

‘Another reason for giving up the task of conversion [in India] is want of success . . . If a Hindoo is irreligious, or, in other words, if he loses his caste, he is deserted by father, mother, wife, child, and kindred, and becomes instantly a solitary wanderer upon the earth . . . We do not say it is difficult to convert the Japanese or the Chinese, but the Hindoos. We are not saying it is difficult to convert human creatures, but difficult to convert human creatures with *such institutions*.’

Since this description of caste as an impregnable bulwark of Satan, against which the Divine purposes in vain rage and swell, the monster institution has receded just enough at least to swear to. A glacier-like movement is perceptible in it at the end of a half century. It is an ascertained fact that it gives way to pressure from events, that it cannot resist the strong claims of obvious matter-of-fact convenience as new improvements from time to time try its hold. Brahmans now wear leather shoes, and travel in company with outcasts by railway: anatomy is found necessary for the science of human health, and the Brahman dissects the human body to make himself a medi-

¹ Mr. Badger, whose missionary zeal and experience none will deny, accepts Lord Stanley’s ground. ‘I do not see that as Christians we ought to require that government should depart from the line of policy marked out by his lordship. If our missionary efforts are not hindered by any state enactments—if we are free to propose Christianity to the acceptance of the natives of India—it is all that we can in fairness demand.’

cal man. We doubt the success of the plan of putting down caste by a vernacular translation of the Rig-Veda, showing the Hindoos its total omission there, and so the want of the highest scriptural authority even of Brahmanism itself for it: we doubt it, because the Brahman's gloss would, in all human likelihood, be ten times more powerful than the naked text, backed as it would be by the whole force of tradition, custom, and subsequent inspiration, which would overwhelm the Vedas not less than the same weight overwhelms the Bible now in Romanist countries, while the set-off of a Hindoo 'reformation' would be evidence of more life and spring than we can attribute to a false religion: but we do not the less value the explanation which the acute orientalist in the 'Times' gives of the institution of caste itself. The ground on which caste arises is a natural one.

'Men who have the same interests, the same occupations, the same principles, unite in self-defence, and, after acquiring power and influence, they not only defend their rights, but claim important privileges. They naturally impose upon their members certain rules, which are considered to be the interest of their caste or company.'

Caste is thus in substance the organisation of society according to professional distinctions, and rises up on the principle of our own associations, circles, leagues, guilds, and clubs; but it adds to this principle that of hereditary membership, and that of a Divine sanction, making it a religious as well as a social institution. While, then, everybody who leaves an hereditary faith must expect social persecution in some shape or other, the result of caste is, that this persecution assumes an extraordinarily compact and penetrating form; that it is systematic, iron, and inexorable; and that the convert, only having belonged to the whole community by the medium of a caste, finds himself, on his exclusion from the section, an outcast from the community. But taking, as we do here, the ground of ultimate issues, we need only remark that, as far as we know, no intimidation has been ultimately able to exclude truth from any human society or nation. The force of truth then is, in its own nature, stronger than caste, which must again constantly tend to decrease under the rule of a civilising power, that both weakens the old institutions, and raises a counter one in the shape of new circles and connexions for the converts.

It only remains now to revert to the original point of view from which we started, and which we have used throughout this article as subsidiary to the great fundamental ground of Scripture prophecy. Politicians and practical men, as such, only recognise that ground of prophecy which is contained in present visible growth, and the ascertained strength of causes in actual

operation, and in that ground Indian conversion is weak. But there is another ground, a real ground of prophecy, contained in the fundamental type of human nature. Is the Hindoo a *man*, veritable and complete, as ourselves? If he is not, then scriptural prophecy has no responsibility about him: it is nowhere prophesied that the Gospel will spread either among the beasts of the field, the fowls of the air, or the fishes of the sea, or in any ambiguous and indescribable genus of beings, but only in the race of man. But if the Hindoo *is* a man, then there is an ultimate certain appeal to the fundamental type on which he is fashioned. The normal idea of worship, the normal idea of immortality, normal morality, physical truth, must, at some time or other, receive his recognition. Consider the aspect in which the world's future would present itself to the mind of one of the old prophets. One small people alone maintained the worship of one God, amidst universal polytheism. Great empires, strong hierarchies, deep philosophies, venerable creeds—all that was imposing and monumental in the world, the whole array of the sagelike were on one side. Yet with these overwhelming facts before him, the prophet announced the certain future universal spread of the true idea of worship. On what ground did he justify to himself this prediction? Doubtless he had a witness in his own breast to an extraordinary gift of prophecy, but he had also a ground of reason backing up that gift. What was it? Was it not that he saw that the worship of one God answered to the type of religion in the human mind; that that was the normal idea of worship, and that the reasonable spirit in man ratified and enforced it? He appealed, then, to that type, to that idea, to that reason in man: he saw that the polytheism of the world could be no more than a temporary fashion, and must pass away like an excrescence before the great archetypal creed: he saw that solid strength in human nature which must one day vindicate itself, the root of the matter there which must ultimately come up. The whole page of prophecy witnesses to this ground in the prophet's mind, being, as it is, one strong appeal throughout to human reason, awakening it to consciousness and shaming it to self-vindication by every argument, which a holy scorn could apply to an unreasonable worship. The Jewish prophet nearly three thousand years ago committed himself to this prediction: the prophecy is before us, and the fulfilment of the prophecy: the whole civilised world now worships his One God! We are only using, then, now, the very same ground of prophecy upon which he, in his simply reasonable character, went, and with the advantage of seeing a vast and overwhelming fulfilment of that prophecy which he did not.

The strength of Brahmanism, we are told, lies in its philosophy: were it only a rude superstition, Christianity would obtain an easy victory over it; but its deep and subtle refinements are more than a match for us. But if the religious history of the world teaches any one lesson clearly it is this: that the great practical ideas and instincts of religion in human nature are too strong for the philosophical ones, and beat them fairly in the encounter. Philosophy is strong as a *check* upon religious ideas, and we thankfully acknowledge the benefit of that check in our own days, amidst religious leaders and partisans, who, with the best intentions, certainly want it. But it is not the function of philosophy to *originate* in religion: strong as a *critic*, and useful with its *veto*, it makes a *foundation* of sand. As a foundation it tried its strength against Christianity eighteen centuries ago. Christianity adopts and dignifies the natural ideas of God—those practical instincts by which we regard the Maker of the universe as an object of worship, a Being who interests himself in our welfare temporal and spiritual, and answers prayer; and standing upon this basis it came into collision with the great classical philosophies. What was the result, then, of that encounter? Where are now all those great philosophies which acknowledged a Supreme God, but assigned Him a nature too pure and sublime for worship, that raised Him above the poor regards of man? The Alexandrian philosophy that set up a genuine Brahmanical and Buddhist deity, too pure to possess even intellect—all those great contemplative systems, with their abstract deities—where are they? Swept away like cobwebs. An idea of God which any one of these philosophers would have treated as the rude conception of a savage—akin to the warring and hunting god of the Scandinavian—the idea of a *negotiosus Deus*, full of human sympathies, busying Himself in human affairs, and interposing for human relief and punishment—in a word, the idea of a personal God who is an object of worship has supplanted them all. So the idea of personal immortality has supplanted that of an absorption into the Deity, which was taught in these systems: the practical instinct has ousted the doctrine of philosophy, that notion of eternal life which men form by speculation. Looking, then, to the contest with Brahmanism, we find, in fact, that every step of the ground has been gone over before. We are told that this is a totally new kind of conquest for Christianity, but it is not; it is only the carrying out of an existing conquest.

It is a striking reflection that civilisation does not adopt these philosophical ideas of the Deity: some have attributed to it that tendency, but as a matter of fact the civilised Euro-

pean's idea of God is far more simple, primitive, and childlike than that of the barbarous Brahmin. Civilisation is a happy compound: as the nurse of the human mind generally, and the fosterer of all its powers, it has encouraged metaphysical philosophy; on the other hand, it has been pre-eminently a practical movement, promoting natural science, discovery, trade, and the social arts. Indeed, Bacon decidedly discouraged theological speculation or metaphysics, and had the movement obeyed his sole direction, it might have become something like Confucianism; but it has had more than one master. Civilisation has thus invested with authority, and given a compactness and system to the ideas of practical men; and this standard of public opinion keeps not only dogmatism but philosophy also in check. The practical religious instincts of human nature are protected by it against the invading force of speculation. The Brahmins and the Schoolmen are both, in their respective ways, examples of the extravagant lengths to which human thought will go, when men get together and sit by themselves spinning their own webs, without any external check upon them. But the advance of civilisation erects an external control and an authoritative standard of common sense. Speculators of the sceptical school are apt to think that, though their ideas are not accepted now, as the world advances they will be; but they mistake the nature of civilisation in this respect.

On grounds of reason then, and apart from the argument of Scripture prophecy, a certain mode of speaking of the conversion of India, as if it were a simple impossibility, is a mistake. Where does this impossibility lie? Is it that the *race* is unfitted for Christianity? The Hindoo is a *man*: nay, the scientific linguist informs us that he is a member of the same branch of the human race with ourselves.¹ Is it in the philosophy of Brahmanism? The Gospel has conquered philosophy. Is it in philosophy and superstition combined? That was the very combination which encountered Christianity on its first start,

¹ Mr. Dasent says: 'They (the Hindoos) have been still the same immoveable and unprogressive philosophers, though akin to Europe all the while; and though the Highlander who drives his bayonet through the heart of a high-caste Sepoy mutineer, little knows that his pale face and sandy hair, and that dark face with his raven locks, both came from a common ancestor away in Central Asia, many, many centuries ago . . . We all came, Greek, Latin, Celt, Teuton, Slavonian, from the East, as kith and kin, leaving kith and kin behind us; and after thousands of years, the language and traditions of those who went east and those who went west bear such an affinity to each other, as to have established beyond discussion or dispute the fact of their descent from a common stock.'—Introduction to 'Popular Tales from the Norse,' pp. 19—22.

and was surmounted. Is it in caste? Caste can do no more than intimidate, and that is no new thing.

It is true that we cannot picture to ourselves with anything like accuracy the slow operation of great causes upon so large a scale as this. We cannot pretend to describe how so vast and long a process as that of Indian conversion will take place, and any prophetic picture must be a daub: still we know that where great causes are at work, an issue is managed somehow, and that by steps which look, one by one, no more than natural and common at the time. What a prophecy would the formation of language have been at the beginning of the world! What genius of detail could have approached to the faintest conception of the grand slowness and minuteness of the actual process, of which that was the miraculous issue? Who could have pictured the multitudinous labyrinthal growth of inflexions, genders, tenses, parts of speech, governments, constructions, the creation of words, the incorporation of metaphor? What a prophecy would the civilisation of the world have been! What a prophecy would the growth of any art have been! What a prophecy would civil government have been! From the extreme confines of the middle ages the prophet of science, two centuries and a half ago, saw the dim outline of a great approaching manifestation of nature. Nothing, we may say, as yet had been done; but Bacon had a basis of prophecy in nature and in man as they presented themselves to him.

Such a basis of calculation does not hurry us. Prophecy, like geology, requires time, and there is no reason why it should not have it. There are many who *live* in time who do not *believe* in time. They have no adequate conception of time in their minds, of the room and space in it for courses of events, or even for the ordinary evolution of any plan of action. Give them any matter of business to manage, and their idea is either to do it at one stroke, or to put it off altogether: in either case there is a most inadequate idea of time, as if it were a simple point which gave no alternative between an absolute cram of action and a total absence of it. An animal instinct sustains the idea of indefinite duration, passively and for purposes of pleasurable sensation; but those whom we have spoken of do not fairly embrace it for purposes of rational action. But there are those whose mode of conception does not do injustice to time, who have an image of it as true room for the evolution of action, with self-extending stages and successive lengths ever projecting themselves into the unknown, long suites of apartments for the procession of events and gradual development of schemes: their inner eye looks down the lengthening vista of folding-doors which

disclose in metaphysical state one after another the telescopic chambers of time. This adequate conception of time is one characteristic of a statesman's mind, which gives him so great an advantage over ordinary men in the arena of public life: he possesses the first preliminary to effective and successful action, a true belief in that which *holds* and *contains* action, in a real field of *time*, in which plans can germinate and grow; while others, for want of this preliminary conviction, do not dare to form such plans, but act from moment to moment. These ideal extensions and prolongations of time in the mind of the man of action, answer to the original spaces and measures in the mind of the orator; those great primordial rhythms, those blank clauses and climaxes which pre-exist in his brain, like vacant bars of music, before he fills them up with words, and represent the mute passion of rhetoric, before they support, as a framework, its expression. Would an orator unlock, he would tell us how these spiritual embryos and unembodied forms of speech rose up like majestic phantoms before him upon the occurrence of great exciting questions, and inspired him for the public effort. Let us form our calculation of the probable issue of the agencies now at work in the world, and especially upon the Indian field, with the full understanding that we have time before us. No reflecting person can avoid, whether he takes a religious ground or not, the conviction that the world's future is a striking and wonderful one: we feel morally certain that were it revealed to us now, it would be inconceivably astonishing; we know that mighty changes must be in store; that things have been on the move since the beginning, and that they will continue to move after we are gone; we know, therefore, in general, that there must be some ultimate stupendous climax of such accumulated motion; we know that the future of prophecy is not at all more surprising than some or other result which must take place, and we can repose without distrust in the strength of those deep causes which point to the ultimate overthrow of all false religions, and the substitution of Christianity in their place.

VII.

HORACE WALPOLE.

Letters of Horace Walpole, Earl of Orford ; edited by Peter Cunningham : now first chronologically arranged. Nine vols. 8vo. Bentley : London, 1857-59.

THE editions of Horace Walpole's letters have been very numerous, and the principle of selection in them has been very various ; but, whatever their merits, their incompleteness detracted from the value of them all, and left a void which still needed to be supplied. The chronological arrangement of his letters, and the publication of many of them now for the first time, render the present edition all that can be desired. The convenience of such an arrangement is obvious : we have now before us a pretty regular journal of what appeared to Walpole to be the most important transactions of the eighteenth century, from the year 1735 to the year 1797, mingled with remarks on characters and manners always more entertaining, and often more instructive than formal history, while the scandal, gossip, and anecdotes, which enliven his pages, impart to them an interest akin to that of Sheridan's comedy or Miss Austen's novels. The editor has performed his functions with laudable zeal, and with a wise economy in annotation. He has retained the notes of previous editors, 'silently correcting their errors, or enlarging their information ;' and his own notes he has 'sought to make appropriate to the text, and, above all things, accurate.' We have detected a few misprints, especially in Latin quotations ; but what are they among nine goodly octavo volumes ? 'Duplex libelli dos est' when an editor tells all that is needful for the readers' instruction, and forbears superfluous comment. Mr. Cunningham is as good as a chorus in interpreting 'who is who,' and from whom descended, in the Walpole portrait-gallery ; in explaining what plays, birthday-odes, or biting satires, attracted notice at Strawberry Hill ; the special occasion of George Selwyn's jests, of the Duchess of Kingston's or the Duke of Newcastle's eccentricities, and of the various foibles, fopperies, or, perchance, vices, incident to persons of quality under the second and third sovereigns of the House of Hanover.

The correspondence of Horace Walpole extends over a period of more than sixty years. During all that time he was inde-

fatigable in his epistolary vocation—for such he considered it to be. ‘Mine,’ he says, to Montagu, ‘is a life of letter-writing.’ For his partiality to this species of composition the reasons are obvious. It had nothing in it common or unclean—and Horace was nice in his contact with literature. Great men, indeed, had in all ages composed histories; but Sir Robert Walpole had told his son that ‘histories could not be true,’ and the son regarded with implicit faith all the *dicta* of his worldly-wise father. And in the estimation of Horace, though in the words of Gibbon, ‘no altar had been raised to the muse of history in Britain,’ until Hume and Robertson respectively had published their first narratives. The remark was untrue; but Walpole was not the man to admire Clarendon’s stately eloquence, or to take pleasure in the folios of Raleigh and Knolles. History, moreover, since Clarendon’s age, had fallen into the hands of vulgar and venal scribes; and the fastidious author of the ‘Memoirs of George the Second’s Reign,’ had no inclination to cast his lot with the ‘Burnets, Oldmixons, and Cookes.’ Such histories, therefore, as he saw good to write, he left for posthumous publication. But the composition of letters was liable to no similar objections. Letter-writing suited a desultory man; letter-writing admitted of much that history excluded—scandal, gossip, floating rumours, jests with the bloom upon them, and, above all, of private malice. There were also high precedents for the art epistolary, —Cicero and Pliny, Pope and Sir William Temple, Lord Chesterfield and Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, had been adepts in it. Nor was there anything vulgar in writing a letter. Letters to a friend involved not dealings with publishers, and were secure, in manuscript at least, from the ribaldry of critics. So though Walpole, first and last, published several quartos, he reserved his strength for his correspondents. ‘He made letter-writing a study,’ says Mr. Cunningham, ‘and was fond of showing his skill in his favourite art.’ For the perpetuity of his name he chose wisely. The works of Lord Orford are seldom taken down from the shelves; the letters of Horace Walpole lie on most library tables, among the novels and newspapers of the day.

Southey, at the opening of his excellent ‘Life of Cowper,’ calls the poet ‘the best of English letter-writers.’ He can hardly have forgotten Walpole when he wrote thus; and the majority of readers will certainly not endorse his opinion. But Southey’s predilection for Cowper’s letters may, possibly, have been owing to some similarity in their respective circumstances, possibly also to a dislike of the Whig principles, and the mocking spirit of Walpole. Without leading the life of the recluse of Olney,

Southey passed many months in each year apart from the world, and in the unbroken routine of a private household; and although no two poets can well have daily looked upon more opposite scenes than Cowper in the flats of Bedfordshire, and Southey among the Cumbrian mountains, yet both equally took delight in celebrating *domestica facta*, the incidents of the week, the doings and the fortunes of their cats and hares, their solitary or social walks, or their literary projects and performances. But while we freely admit Cowper's excellence as a letter-writer, we must award the palm to Walpole. So far as respects style, indeed, we think Cowper entitled to the preference. The one invariably writes English pure and undefiled; the other often indulges in phrases and licences of speech, which, though elegant in their native French, are improprieties, if not indeed barbarisms, in English. Again, the humour of Cowper is often more agreeable, because it is more spontaneous, than the wit of Walpole. But all comparison ends as soon as we pass from the manner to the matter of these letter-writers. Between Cowper's ignorance of what the world beyond the boundaries of Olney or Weston, was doing, and Walpole's knowledge of what it was making or marring in London or Paris, at Windsor or in St. Stephen's Chapel, there is as much difference as that which exists between the news of a local paper, and the daily volume of the 'Times.' In the one case, we marvel at the writer's skill in making so much of his slender materials; in the other at the writer's power of compressing infinite intelligence in a little room. In Cowper, we behold a naturally cheerful temper struggling with disease, and catching at trifles to divert himself and his correspondents; in Walpole, we see the workings of an inquisitive spirit, which, having accidentally missed its true vocation in public life, busies itself incessantly with a world which it affects to despise.

That one who exhibited himself under such various phases to his correspondents, and through them to the world, should be himself portrayed by others under the most inconsistent aspects, need not excite surprise. If Horace Walpole is represented by those who know him in his writings alone as a coxcomb, 'a fribble,' (the word is Warburton's,) a tuft-hunter, or as heartless, vain, and superficial, he has none to thank for these ungracious epithets but himself. We think, in opposition to some high authorities, that behind his mask there breathed a kindly nature, as undoubtedly there lurked an intellect more powerful than he ever affected to possess. A mask, and a very flexible one too, it was his pleasure to wear, and neither he nor his friends have any right to complain that the vizor has been generally taken for

the natural countenance. Yet they who have described Horace Walpole as the 'meanest of mankind,' who allow him no merit except that of a talent for letter-writing, who liken him to the reed which bruises the hand that leans on it, to the summer friend, to the flattering foe, have forgotten, or did not like to remember, that when Conway was supposed to be in distress, Walpole offered to divide his whole income with his friend, that he took on himself the entire blame of his early quarrel with Gray, that he was generous to some most perverse relatives, that he was an affectionate guardian and adviser to his nieces, and that his friendship for Mrs. Clive and the Miss Berrys never chilled or changed. Not habitually liberal, he was strictly just; and while betraying more anxiety about his income—an income, be it remembered, dependent, in great measure, on the will and pleasure of every new First Lord of the Treasury—than became his assumed philosophy, he was secretly and discreetly generous. His correspondence with his deputies in the Exchequer, Mr. Grosvenor Bedford and Mr. Charles Bedford, now published for the first time by Mr. Bentley, 'reveals to us what Walpole revealed to no other person, his unostentatious charity, and his active sympathy with persons incarcerated for debt.' When we condemn his assumption or his concealment in other matters, let us not forget to record that he also suppressed much which many men would have proclaimed.

Again, while it is pretty generally agreed that he was the best of English letter-writers, his other works have met with scant praise, at least in the present generation. One critic sees little to admire in the 'Castle of Otranto,' except the brevity and smart dialogue of the story. Walpole's contemporaries thought differently, and so do those admirable judges of fiction, schoolboys and schoolgirls. Even now were their voices collected, we are persuaded that they would generally subscribe to Gray's opinion on the romancelet. 'It makes some of us,' he wrote to Walpole in 1764, 'cry a little: and all, in general, afraid to go to bed o' nights.' He has been charged with merely pointing other men's building, yet who would read, or have even heard of Vertue's 'Notes on Painters,' had not Walpole breathed life into these dry bones? His detractors, too, have not remarked how much in the present world of literature and art was initiated by Walpole. His 'Mysterious Mother,' repulsive as its plot is, has more of the vein of the Elizabethan and Carolinian drama, than can be found in any tragedy of a date subsequent to the Restoration. His 'Castle of Otranto' is the Banquo of an innumerable issue of stories, that harrowed thousands of readers with fear and wonder, until Scott rendered history tributary to

fiction, and showed that terror and pity can be awakened by more natural instruments than sombre forests and solitary castles, or nuns with bleeding bosoms, and spectres treading long corridors in the very armour which they wore in life. His building at Strawberry Hill, though now looked upon by those whose eyes are opened by Pugin and Sir Charles Barry as gingerbread Gothic, was yet, sixty years since, a step in the right path, of which architects like Batty Langley and Wyatt were incapable; and it is to Gray, Thomas Warton, and Horace Walpole, that the Rickmans, and other leaders of the revival of the present day, are remotely indebted for the dawn of that better taste and more profound knowledge which their own writings display. His 'Catalogue of Royal and Noble Authors,' set the fashion of minute inquiry among the byways of history, and has led to results of incalculable value to history on the grand scale. The deeply read are few in number in any age, and they will always resort to the Oldyses, the Baillets, and Hearnese for information; but the curious in every age are many, and they will apply with profit and pleasure to such instructors as Walpole. Finally, his museum, even if its contents sometimes excite a smile, was one of the parents of archæological societies, and the Strawberry Hill's

' Routh o' auld nick-nackets,
Rusty airn caps an' jinglin jackets,
An' parrich pats an' auld saut-buckets, '

has indirectly thrown light on Froissart's pages, and on Shakspeare's scenes.

Walpole has been taxed with exalting to high station in literature, so far at least as regards his own 'little senate,' 'slight unmeritable men,' and of undervaluing or ignoring the burning and shining lights of his age. It is alleged that he claims for writers of rank and fashion the precedence in literature, to which they were really entitled in drawing-rooms: that he speaks of the contributors to the periodical paper called 'The World' as 'our first writers,' although, with the exception of Soame Jenyns and Lord Chesterfield, not one of them is now remembered, even in name,—that he could not read Thomson's 'Seasons,' or Rasselas, or Tom Jones,—that he thought meanly of Robertson's Charles Fifth; and had little relish for the 'Night Thoughts,' or the 'Divine Legation.' Yet, unless we regard Gray, Mason, Hume, Robertson, and Gibbon, as ineffectual lights of the eighteenth century, this allegation falls to the ground. Every one of these writers was greeted by Walpole on his first appearance with hearty applause: for Gray he felt as much reverence as his nature was perhaps capable of, and although he considered

Robertson's 'History of Charles,' inferior to his 'History of Scotland,' there is neither proof nor symptom in his writings of a decreasing admiration for the 'Decline and Fall.' Walpole's reluctance to be ranked among authors, when contrasted with the facts of his having published quartos, and the pains he took with his epistolary compositions, has drawn upon him much grave censure, which, though not undeserved, has been, in our opinion, excessive. To understand his scruples, or perhaps his affectation in the matter of authorship, we must advert to what he saw and knew of the literary men of his time. In his youth he was not well situated for observing them as a class. The writers in the pay of the minister were a venal crew, with few pretensions to literary merit, and with none to honest or consistent principles. The captain of these banditti, who a century earlier would have taken indifferently the pay of the Swede or the Austrian, was Arnall, an attorney of more than ordinary ill repute. This hireling, who lisped in libels in his very nonage, wrote in 'The Free Briton,' and 'The Gazetteer' under the honoured name of *Francis Walsingham*. He is reported to have received from Walpole above ten thousand pounds for his ignominious labours, and to have retired from them with a pension. 'The pompous folios of Gordon,' as Gibbon justly terms that writer's translation of, and dissertations on Tacitus, formed a small portion only of his literary tasks. Gordon was an active pamphleteer in the service of the Treasury, and was rewarded with a commissionership of wine-licences. Guthrie, who passed from the camp of the Walpoles to that of the Pelhams, unblushingly avowed himself 'an author by profession,' which, being interpreted, meant 'an author to let.' Nor were the Tory scribes Nicholas Amhurst or Dr. James Drake a whit more respectable. So numerous indeed, and so eager for employment were these worthies, that the minister at length grew tired of employing them, and left them to prosper as they could in the barren service of the Opposition, or to fatten on the promises of Leicester House. So common indeed was the trade of selling the pen, that even Johnson avowed that 'till fame appears to be worth more than money, he would always prefer money to fame;' while Fielding, in one of his Covent Garden Journals, asserts that 'an author in a country where there is no public provision for men of genius, is not obliged to be a more disinterested patriot than any other. Why is he whose livelihood is in his pen, a greater monster in using it to serve himself, than he who uses his tongue for the same purpose?'

The truth is, that at the time when Horace Walpole first contemplated literary society in England, there was little in it to

attract any but a very needy man, and much to repel an honest one. The time for individual patronage had passed away, the time for support and encouragement by a reading public had not arrived. 'The vocation of poet was in no good repute. 'By heavens, Frank!' exclaims the elder Osbaldiston, in 'Rob Roy,' on discovering that Mr. Francis had been writing verses in place of invoices, 'you are a greater fool than I took you for.' Mr. Osbaldistone's opinion was founded upon the fortunes and characters of such adventurers as Richard Savage, who one day flaunted in purple and fine linen, and dined on ortolans and claret—the proceeds of a prosperous dedication or a popular play—and the next were inmates of a spunging-house, or grovelled on the ashes of a glass-house, because they had not wherewith to pay for a night's lodging. A comparison of Horace Walpole's age with that of some of his most distinguished literary contemporaries may assist us in understanding his repugnance to be deemed a professional author. He was ten years younger than Fielding, eight years younger than Samuel Johnson, and six years younger than David Hume. Smollett, Robertson, Goldsmith and Gibbon, were his juniors. Cowper, Churchill, and Bonnell Thornton, were at Westminster while he was at Eton, and the works by which they rendered the Georgian era illustrious were not produced until long after Walpole had chosen his course and imbibed his prejudices. Of Goldsmith, Johnson, and Smollett, his earliest knowledge would be that they were in the pay of Osborn, Cave, and Griffith, and though raised above the common herd by their abilities, yet belonged to it by their calling as writers. David Hume, again, private secretary to Lord Hertford, and the observed of all observers in the saloons of Paris, was a very different person from David Hume, partly tutor, partly keeper in the house of a half-sane kinsman. Robertson in his manse at Gladsmuir was as remote from Walpole's ken, as if he had been keeper of archives to the King of Dahomey, and if he had heard Gibbon's name it was probably in connection with his removal from Oxford, as a convert to the Romish church. Of the earlier and greater luminaries of our literature there are few traces in Walpole's letters. He once or twice cites a verse or two from the 'Faery Queen,' the merits of which he may have heard from his friend Gray. He seems to have preferred Racine to Shakspeare, and speaks of the 'Midsummer Night's Dream' as one might now speak of a third-rate opera. Perhaps, like Johnson, he accounted 'Paradise Lost' a task to read; certainly he betrays no tokens of acquaintance with it; and of Chaucer he knew as much as he did of the *Sacontala*.

Indeed, both as regards his political and his literary career,

Horace Walpole held a position very similar to that of the bat in the fable, when the birds and the beasts went to war with one another. Although, throughout his life, he was a Whig of the Whigs in theory, he actually belonged neither to the Pelham section nor the Bedford section of that party. Although his pen was that of a ready writer, authors by profession, with few exceptions, looked askance on him as a fine gentleman, while fine gentlemen, on their part, stood in awe of him as a wit. Again, the social habits of those days militated against his popularity. He never owned a race-horse, or betted a guinea at Newmarket: he would play at loo till two in the morning, but he would not shake a dice-box at White's: and while two-thirds of the world were quaffing their particular port and madeira, he was drinking tea or iced water. Among the strong-headed men of that time he passed for a Sir Courtly Nice, or a Fastidious Brisk. His favourite pursuits, too, were as generally unacceptable as himself. Pope's 'Satires' upon the Vistos and Curios of Queen Anne's reign, and Johnson's declamations against the trifling of *virtuosos*, were fresh in men's ears; and Walpole's antiquarian studies seemed as frivolous as any which were ridiculed in the 'Dunciad' or the 'Rambler.' Even Walpole's friends contributed, in some measure, to the disfavour in which he was held. Gray was stiff and shy in general society; had the mien of a *petit maître*; 'had no dislike,' as Walpole said of him, 'to find fault;' had, now and then, unsheathed satirical claws; dressed, in his muff, bootikins, and mulberry-coloured silk coat, more like a French marquis than a true Briton; and chilled even scholars like Dr. Conyers Middleton by his great learning and his habitual reserve. Mason was not merely a parson in buckram, but also a satirist more pungent than Young, and but little less so than Pope. Cole, though an Etonian bred, had become, by long residence among the fens of Cambridge-shire, a kind of Parson Adams, very erudite in antiquity, very alarming in polite company. Conway was a blunt soldier; and Sir Horace Mann, expatriated at Florence, was as little known as the Grand Duke in the clubs of London. The envy which pursued the Roman Horace to the saloons of Mæcenas and Augustus followed his English namesake to St. James's. His niece had married for her second husband a prince of the blood royal. The daughters of England made morning calls at Strawberry Hill, and played cards with Walpole at Windsor: and though 'principibus placuisse viris non ultima laus est' might have been pleaded by him, yet the favours of royal hosts, or guests, are apt to enkindle ill feelings in those who do not participate in them.

Errors of taste have been imputed to Walpole as high crimes and misdemeanours. We have already cited his opinion of the 'Midsummer Night's Dream.' In a letter to Sir Horace Mann, he says that he would rather have written the most absurd lines of mad Nathaniel Lee than Thomson's 'Seasons.' We do not pretend to excuse such rash or shallow judgments: yet they perhaps admit, if the circumstances of Walpole's life and position be fairly weighed, of some extenuation. We can remember the time when the sale of Mr. Robert Montgomery's poems far exceeded that of Mr. Wordsworth's. It is even on record that an eminent London publisher expressed, by a cipher in his ledger, the market value of the 'Lyrical Ballads.' Dr. Parr pronounced a certain Mr. Stewart to be a greater poet than either Scott, Byron, or Moore. Yet we do not, therefore, consider the nineteenth century as the lower empire of literature, or deny to Dr. Parr the merit of great, though ill-digested learning. Walpole did not admire Dr. Johnson; had no special liking for Goldsmith; and took a wrong measure of Edmund Burke. With the Johnsonian circle his own did not osculate. But are these dislikes to be put down to the account of wholesale affectation or positive incompetence? Let us endeavour to realize Walpole's relations to the literary world of his day before assuming a virtuous indignation at his opinions of its leaders. He had never been made free of the guild of literature, as literature, for the most part, then was. He had never been in doubt, when he rose in the morning, whether he should be able to afford himself a dinner at noon. He had never been exposed to Osborn's insolence, or been postponed to Colley Cibber in Lord Chesterfield's antechamber. The world had always presented itself to him as it appears in Bunyan's 'Vanity Fair,' arrayed in silk and velvet and with all the pomp and circumstance of gilded chariots and sideboards of plate. He knew Grub Street only by report. He confounded Johnson and Goldsmith with all he had heard of Savage in his youth, and of Churchill in his riper years. He was at once too near and too apart from them to speak of them dispassionately, and he regarded them in Mrs. Thrale's drawing-room as he would have regarded them in the garrets of Fleet Street or the Minorities.

For these offences his memory has been visited with ample, perhaps with excessive, severity. By politicians he has been denounced as the prince of hypocrites, the most grasping of placemen, the most faithless of partisans. By authors he has been assailed as a frivolous, affected, and timid writer, panting for literary fame, yet ashamed of being reckoned among the brethren of the craft—

‘Letting I dare not wait upon I would,
Like the poor cat i’ the adage.’

Whigs cry ‘shame on his half-fellowship:’ Tories hold him up as an example of Whig meanness. The world laughs with him and at him; but neither the world nor its law is his friend. Yet the arrows with which he has been pierced have been drawn from his own quiver; and he has been condemned above his fellows because he has furnished more abundant evidence against himself than all of them put together. The candour which has been applauded in Horace and Montaigne is accounted a crime in Walpole. Lord Macaulay has rent him like a lion: the late Mr. Croker has tracked his frivolities and his anxieties, on the score of his places and pensions, with the pertinacity of a bloodhound. His wit, anecdotes, and acquaintance with the secret history of England in the nineteenth century, have amused the idle and instructed the diligent, while the reputation of one who has so liberally catered for both classes of readers has been as roughly handled as if he had been a criminal and not simply a coxcomb.

But we do not propose to become Horace Walpole’s advocates. To be blind to his faults we must close our eyes purposely to the evidence which he has himself furnished of them. We might as well refuse to see Cibber’s vanity, Boswell’s incontinence of speech, the simplicity of Goldsmith, or the arrogance of Johnson. When, however, we are told that Walpole’s sketches of his contemporaries are as untrustworthy as Plutarch’s ‘Lives,’ and that Plutarch had the excuse of distance of time and paucity of documents for his inaccuracy, which will not avail Walpole, we must not forget that, since the publication of his ‘Letters’ to Mann and Conway, his portraits of the great Whig leaders and the great Tory leaders have been often confirmed by independent vouchers, and most remarkably by Lord Hervey’s ‘Memoirs.’ Walpole coloured highly, especially when he dipped his brush in gall: nor was he consistent in his likes and dislikes, setting up and pulling down, changing square for round at different periods of his long life. Yet to deny him all credit because he is not always consistent with himself involves consequences that would equally affect all historians of their own times. How would Clarendon and Burnet, Cicero and Cæsar, or even Xenophon and Thucydides bear such a test? What would become of the memorialists of the Fronde, of the Regency, or of the Revolution of 1789, if they were put to such a probation? Indeed, what has been said aptly enough of Seneca—that ‘he went to the fair of good names and bought a reasonable commodity of them’—cannot be said of Walpole. In his

lifetime his hand was against many men, and during his life and since his death, the hands of many men have been against him. Of his foibles whips have been made to scourge him with. He was a vain man, and men vain as he have been loud in their rebukes of his vanity; he was an irritable man, and writers possessing the temper but not the pen of Junius have denounced his irascibility; he was an artful man, but he had not the art to hide it gracefully; and he was an ambitious man, but his ambition was not of the kind which ennobles its owner, or which, in the long run, men applaud.

The Letters which we have now before us, arranged in the order of time, afford, perhaps, the most complete and curious journal of a life to be found in any literature. The circumstances which gave to that life its form and colour we shall presently examine: but we must first say a word or two on Walpole's autobiography—for such his Letters are. That he intended them for publication there can be no doubt. He begged his living friends to return the originals to him: he required and obtained them from the heirs and executors of his deceased correspondents: he caused careful transcripts to be made of them: he set the example of publishing a few of them himself: he bequeathed others on certain conditions: and he guarded them all with as much jealousy as his title-deeds to Strawberry Hill. To his Letters he confided his thoughts, favours, fears, and affections, as the satirist Lucilius intrusted all that he felt or purposed to his books.

‘Ille velut fidis arcana sodalibus olim
 Credebat libris———
 ———quo fit ut omnis
 Votiva pateat veluti depicta tabella
 Vita senis.’———

There can be little doubt, then, that he thought his life sufficiently important for posterity to know, and that he looked forward to a time when his correspondence would furnish the materials for a sketch, if not a portrait, of him as he lived and laboured, or, as he perhaps would have phrased it, as he loitered and trifled. Such an undertaking would require a writer of kindred mood to Walpole; but we can perhaps suggest, with these volumes before us, some of the conditions for its proper execution.

The times in which Walpole lived, the family to which he belonged, and the position he occupied from a very early period of his life—a position quite inconsistent with the promise of his youth and earlier manhood—severally affected his disposition, his opinions, and his writings, and will accordingly be

worth a brief survey on the present occasion. Whatever doubts may have been raised of the sincerity of his friendship, none have ever been whispered of the strength of his filial affection. He inscribed beneath McArdell's mezzotint from his portrait by Sir Joshua—he desired to inscribe on his tomb at Houghton—‘Horace Walpole, youngest son of Sir Robert Walpole, Earl of Orford.’

‘A Jove principium,’—we commence our speculations on the character of the son with a brief survey of the public and private life of the father. The reign of George the Second may not disadvantageously be compared, for the real happiness of the community, with any earlier portion of English annals. The aspect of this country towards foreign nations has often been more dignified, and seldom, since she possessed a literature or aspired to art, has her intellectual condition been lower than in this reign. A few of the wits of Anne's time still lingered on the stage, but their greatest works had been written, and the greater lights of the Georgian era had scarcely appeared on the horizon. The nation, however, in general prospered. The wages of the labourer were higher than at any former period; agriculture was better remunerated; commerce better understood; and the public debt, though its amount then excited alarms which now appear ludicrous, and though too little care was taken in redeeming it, pressed lightly on the nation; and even the loans demanded by the war of 1743, were scarcely felt at the moment. The long wars of William and Anne had exhausted the patience of the English people: they were weary of barren glory, and sighed for more substantial fruits of their blood and treasure than the humiliation of the House of Bourbon, or the maintenance of the triple alliance. The administration of the ‘great peace minister,’ afforded them the desired repose, and during the twenty years that followed the Treaty of Hanover, spears were turned into pruning-hooks, and the borders of our commercial enterprise were greatly extended. As a consequence of the increase of wealth, the power of the territorial aristocracy was encroached upon by rich capitalists. They were enabled to purchase the smaller boroughs which had been hitherto the property of the Crown, or of the neighbouring peers and gentlemen, and Norwich, Bristol, and Leeds grew formidable in the Commons house. Money was rapidly becoming a rival to high birth; the sheep-skin of the Howards was counterpoised by the sheep-skin of bonds and mortgages, and boroughs, like estates in land or bills of exchange, became negotiable property.

The station of prime minister has never been more authoritative in England than it was in Walpole's hands. For a brief season

the elder or the younger Pitt may, in virtue of popular panic or clamour, have been as powerful. Of former sovereigns some had ruled as well as governed; others had devolved on their cabinets or their favourites the business, and reserved for themselves the pleasures of their high office. William the Third had been his own foreign secretary: none knew so well as he 'what the French or what the Swede intended,' and no one, therefore, was better qualified for the post than himself. Anne was herself governed, at least in all temporal matters, by the Churchills, by Lady Masham, or by any one sufficiently near at hand to coax or frighten her; yet neither Harley, St. John, Marlborough, nor Godolphin, were at any time the sole arbiters of the destinies of Britain. Without were intrigues with St. Germain; within were closet and back-stair influences. Walpole was the first to rule this kingdom nearly independently of both crown and parliament: of the crown, because George the Second was absorbed by the affairs of his electorate; of parliament, because, if the members were not universally Walpole's servants, a sufficient majority for all working purposes either pocketed or hoped for his wages. The crown had lost, the people had not yet acquired, power over its representatives; and not until a younger generation, ignorant of the burden of wars, had arisen, did the nation wax impatient of material prosperity, or kick against the minister whose policy insured it.

Yet, in spite of all these material advantages, the era of Walpole was not one for a great nation to be proud of. It was not, indeed, like that of Charles II., an age seemingly given over to corruption and vice; it was not like that of the first Charles, a time of trial for constitutional government; nor like the first moiety of George the Third's reign, a period of distraction at home and dishonour abroad. But it was a low era; low in its morals, low in its religious tone, low in intellect and art, low also in the habits of social life. Nor was the character of the minister himself calculated to raise that of the age. He could render a people prosperous; he could make the sovereign respected; he long managed the House of Commons, as he managed his estate in Norfolk. His speeches were remarkable for their good sense; his good humour was almost imperturbable; he brooked, indeed, no divisions in his camp, and would rather cast to the winds his best supporters than permit them to be laggard or wander at will. But on the obedient his yoke was easy, and if there were any pain in compliance it was effectually soothed by remedies dispensed quarterly from the treasury. Here, however, Walpole's merits ended; his eloquence did not inspire the hearers of it with noble purposes or emotions; his measures made men richer,

but not more free or enlightened. He would have stared and laughed had any one suggested to him the education of the masses; he would have acquiesced and laughed if a Deist sat in the throne of Tillotson; and his laughter would have been extinguishable had any person whom he accounted sane proposed to him a reform in the representation of the people.

Walpole's influence for good or evil ceased on the 9th of February, 1742. His son Horace was then in his twenty-fifth year, and we will now trace his fortunes up to this the decisive epoch of his life. For though he could never have filled his father's place, yet, from the few samples he gave of parliamentary ability, it is by no means improbable that he might have proved not more unworthy to succeed the great peace minister of George II. than the younger Pitt was to succeed the great war minister of George III.

The education of Horace Walpole resembled, in all its external features at least, that of the young noblemen and wealthy commoners of his day; he was committed to a private tutor, under whose roof 'his cousins, the four younger sons of Lord Townshend, were his companions;' Eton, King's College, Cambridge, and what was then called 'the grand tour of Europe.' At Eton the sedentary and studious habits of later years already displayed themselves—the child was father of the man; or, as in his case it may be interpreted, the valetudinarian boy of the self-indulgent man. His companions at Eton and Cambridge were lads unfitted, like himself, for athletic exercises: Gray and West, George Montagu and Cole. We are not told whether Cole so early displayed a taste for antiquarian pursuits, but we know that Gray and West cultivated Latin verses more than football or cricket, and read beyond their daily tasks in Virgil and Horace. Montagu, in a MS. memoir in Mr. Cunningham's possession, probably describes the five schoolmates in the following description of his own boyhood. 'I was of a tender, delicate constitution and turn of mind, and more adapted to reading than to exercise, to sedentary amusements than robust play. I had an early passion for poetry: at Eton, when in the fifth form, I presumed to make English verses for my exercise, a thing not practised then.' Gray's disrelish for the regular and remunerative studies of Cambridge is notorious. Walpole, who had not his bread to earn, was not likely to pursue the path to university honours; on the contrary, with the then nearly certain prospect of public life before him, he more wisely 'went to lectures in civil law to Dr. Dickens of Trinity Hall, learnt Italian of Signor Piazza:' in the long vacation 'learnt to dance and fence, and to draw of Bernard Lens,' master, he com-

placently adds, 'to the Duke of Cumberland and the Princesses Mary and Louisa.' Gibbon, 'hiving knowledge with each studious year,' attended in mature life the mathematical lectures of Simpson, and the anatomical course of John Hunter. Walpole curtly says, 'I heard [at Cambridge] Dr. Battie's anatomical lectures.' How his mathematical studies prospered he told Miss Berry nearly sixty years after both his tutors, 'blind Professor Sanderson' and a more patient Mr. Travigar, had alike given up their pupil in despair.

But it was what he heard and saw at home that trained the youthful Horace in the way he was destined to go. 'His writings, from youth to age,' says Mr. Cunningham, 'breathe the most affectionate love for his mother, and the most unbounded filial regard for his father.' We take this to be a correct division of his feelings towards either parent. His intercourse with Sir Robert, at least during his school and college days, can have been little more than a few rough yet cordial greetings on the staircase in Arlington Street, or in the sitting-room at Houghton. For the hours which the minister could spare from the House or the royal closet were absorbed by his beagles, his Norfolk warrens and preserves, his picture-gallery, Mrs. Maria Skerret's boudoir, and—the bottle. At a later period, indeed, the anecdote-loving son hung on the lips of his narrative sire, and imbibed from them a profound knowledge of secret history as well as a profound distrust of mankind. But these confidences were limited to seasons when the gout kept old Sir Robert in his easy chair. As soon as his chains were loosened, he rode as hard and drank as freely as ever, to the scandal of his graver neighbours, one of whom, his kinsman and colleague, Lord Townshend, was annually driven from Rainham when the roar of Comus and his crew was up at the neighbouring Houghton. Horace could not endure the beef-witted lords and squires of East-Anglia in those days, and had as little taste for the bottle as the kennel. In his mother centered itself his filial love. Horace was her youngest child—youngest by eleven years—the child, therefore, in a manner, of her old age. He was extremely weak and delicate; and those about him in his infancy were wont to say, 'This child cannot live long.' Fears for his life and pity for his feebleness rendered even a mother's love unusually intense, and her son ever cherished the tenderest recollection of her devotion to him. Gray, for a like reason, entertained similar feelings. 'I have found,' he writes to West after his mother's death, 'that one can have but one mother.' In the Chapel of Henry VII.—'that acre sown with royal seed,' as Jeremy Taylor calls it—where our Stuart kings and queens lie entombed beside

William of Orange, Horace Walpole erected a marble statue (a copy of the Livia Mattei) of his mother. The memory of her virtues at once saddened and consoled him in the incongenial region of Houghton; and when he collected his writings he took care to record a saying of Pope's that the mother of Horace Walpole was 'untainted by a court.'

The children, however, of Robert Walpole, Esq., the younger, of Houghton, and of Catherine, eldest daughter of John Shorter, of Bybrook, were not altogether reared like the other sons and daughters of the land. In those days a prime minister was sometimes expected to amuse as well as to hear, instruct, and advise majesty, and with good punch and bad Latin Sir Robert heard, counselled, and entertained King George the First. The friendship which existed between the jovial statesman and the forlorn old elector, who missed his stately parterres and ugly house at Herrenhausen, and who expected weekly that some revolution would thrust him out of England, was transferred to Queen Caroline, and though her royal partner was less attached to Sir Robert than his father had been, the king liked his minister well enough, and trusted him implicitly. These friendships of the closet, almost unavoidably rendered the Walpoles and the royal household one family. Their feuds were common; their interests were alike, since both were concerned in opposing the Tories generally, and the Leicester House section of the Whigs particularly, and the sons of the prime minister, in a court and state divided by jealous factions, were scarcely less flattered or envied than if they had been actual scions of royalty. Such a position, at a period of life when impressions are the strongest, exerted its natural effect on the mind of the younger Walpole. He affects in his writings to applaud the sentence by which Cæsar and Charles the First perished, yet his republicanism is but lip-deep, and he was at all times an observer of royalty in the concrete. He has put on record his early yearning to see a king, a yearning, doubtless, derived from the echoes and the atmosphere of his father's house in Downing Street. 'It was,' he says in his 'Reminiscences,' 'the first vehement inclination that I ever expressed.' His vehemence prevailed. His mother solicited the Duchess of Kendal to obtain for him the honour of kissing his majesty's hand. The favour so unusual to be asked by a boy of ten years old, could not be refused to the first minister's child, although the Duchess was at that moment plotting against Sir Robert in favour of the 'cankered Bolingbroke,' as Addison was wont to term him.

Walpole attributes his desire to salute the royal hand, to the

‘female attendants in the family putting it into his head.’ It is probable that the hearing so much of royal doings at home was cause quite sufficient for the curiosity of a boy of ten years old, who may moreover have fancied, with Jeanie Deans, that he should behold the king bearing his crown and sceptre, and sitting in the gate of his palace. If he did so, he was much disappointed, for he saw only by candle-light an elderly man, very like the head on his own shillings, ‘with a dark tie-wig, a plain coat, waistcoat, and breeches of snuff-coloured cloth, with stockings of the same colour, and a blue riband over all.’ Master Horace was so engrossed by this august spectacle of a middle-sized gentleman in a suit of ditto, that he scarcely looked at his fair companion. A glance, however, on entering the room showed him a very tall, lean, ill-favoured old lady, Erengard de Schulemberg, Duchess of Munster in Ireland, and Duchess of Kendal in England.

The fair promise of Horace Walpole’s boyhood and early manhood was overcast by his father’s unpopularity towards the close of his career. At twenty he was caressed and flattered by all who coveted a cheque on the Treasury or an invitation to shoot partridges at Houghton. He was then the ‘*spes altera Romæ*,’ the cynosure of youthful expectants and veteran sinecurists. He says, indeed, that at this period of his life his father showed him no especial favour; but the *secreta aulæ* were unfathomed by the world of suitors, and hope sprang eternal in their breasts. At twenty-five he was ‘old Sir Robert’s son’ only, and Sir Robert, now Lord Orford, was out of place, and no more ‘that same mighty man’ who held the keys of the political Elysium, but an unpopular minister awaiting the recompense of Clarendon, and meriting, as many thought, the doom of Strafford. The divisions of his adversaries saved the ex-minister from the threatened impeachment, and their feuds and follies were leading the nation to regret its haste in discarding him, when a power more inexorable than the voice of the people or the judgment of his peers arrested the veteran statesman. His death did not pave the way for his son’s advancement, in spite of the reaction in his favour. Horace would not act with that section of the Whigs which had undermined his father’s power; he could not ally himself, in the teeth of family traditions, with the opponents of the Whigs; nor did he possess the energy, the patience, or the forward-looking faith which enabled Sir Robert Peel to reorganise a shattered party after the passing of the Reform Bill in 1832.

On the 10th of March, 1739, Walpole set out on his travels, accompanied by his friend Mr. Thomas Gray, to whom the post

of companion to the prime minister's son doubtless seemed advancement. Their temporary disagreement is as notorious as their eventual friendship. Travelling requires of its yokefellows nearly as much common forbearance as marriage; but whether Walpole were the principal offender or not, he subsequently took on himself the whole blame of their brief divorce. His letters to West at this period, though devoid of the ease of his later epistolary style, lead us to regret that 'to travel and to relate his travels had not been his occupation.' He did not possess the glowing pencil of Beckford or Byron, but like these eminent writers, he had a shrewd eye for at least the surface of foreign manners, sufficient knowledge of the arts to write agreeably about them, and sufficient sense of the sublime in nature, or the ridiculous in society, to keep his readers in good humour with him. We infer, however, rather than learn directly, what was the influence of novel scenes and manners upon Walpole's mind. One prominent result of his travels was to render him almost as much a Frenchman in his tastes and feelings as Gibbon afterwards became. His persiflage is French; his language, often to its great detriment, is cast in French moulds; he has frequently modernised and appropriated in his letters, stories culled from the innumerable French *ana* and jest-books, and he merited the compliment or the satire which Madame du Deffand addressed to Gibbon—'You take such pains to be a Frenchman, that you deserve to have been born one.' Of Italy, its manners, and its literature, there are few traces in his writings, although we learn from them that he spoke and wrote the language with tolerable ease. But to the world at large the most important consequence of his Italian sojourn, was the formation of his intimacy with 'Mr. Horace Mann,' since to it we owe a correspondence of thirty years, and perhaps the most instructive portion of his writings.

In the 'Short Notes of his Life,' occurs the following important entry in the year 1741:—'I landed at Dover on the 12th of September, O.S., having been chosen Member of Parliament for Kellington, [Callington] in Cornwall, at the preceding general election, which Parliament put a period to my father's administration, which had continued above twenty years.' The vacation was over, the serious business of his life seemed—it was in seeming only—to be now opening upon him.

The causes of the prime minister's fall concern us, on the present occasion, only as they affected the conduct and opinions of his son in after-life. We shall, therefore, briefly state by what implements and by what tactics he was at length overthrown, and then proceed to examine their bearings on Horace

himself, as the liveliest, if not the most trustworthy, of commentators on the parties and social life of England for fifty years from his father's resignation, February 9th, 1742. The maxim of 'divide et impera' was never more forcibly illustrated than in the case of Sir Robert Walpole. Long before that date he had become obnoxious to a considerable minority in Parliament, to a great majority of the nation, and almost universally to coffee-house politicians and to journalists and pamphleteers. He fed a hungry crowd of adherents; but even they began to waver in their allegiance, in the hope of better days. The yet more hungry multitude of expectants it was impossible to satisfy. Even a sovereign may linger too long on the stage: Rome wearied of the conservative Augustus, and England of the brave and wise Elizabeth, nor has any administration, whether Whig or Tory, increased in popularity as it has advanced in years. The phalanx which opposed Walpole was one of unusual strength and of untiring activity. The heir to the crown was his enemy, and, poor creature as he was in all respects, the name of Frederic Prince of Wales was a tower of strength to the malcontents. All the Tories and all the avowed or concealed Jacobites were his foes, and how strong were still Jacobite predilections, may be read in the history of Samuel Johnson. At many a table where 'the king over the water' was silently toasted, confusion to Sir Robert was clamorously drunk. Those who waited in the anterooms of the presence-chamber grudged Walpole's presence in the closet, and all who panted for uncertain change, detested a minister whose favourite rule was 'quieta non movere.' Fortunately for the duration of his power these hostile elements were disunited. The opposition was split into two bands, and it was long before they consented to be led up as one body to assail their common enemy.

Yet Walpole was not invincible, and more than once or twice had already yielded to pressure. He had shown that if he loved his country well he loved power still better. Though he disapproved of the harsh and unjust laws against dissenters, though he listened to their statements of grievance and even promised redress, he allowed others to propose remedial measures, and then voted against them. He had displayed infirmity of purpose in the matter of Wood's patent, of the Porteous Bill, of the Excise Bill. He had suffered himself, against the strongest convictions and the loudest professions, to be forced into a war with Spain. He was composed, to borrow a modern phrase often since illustrated by pregnant examples, 'of squeezable materials.' At last the opposition prevailed. 'It is not by Hector's hand alone, I fall,' said the dying Patroclus, 'but by

that of Euphorbus among men, and that of Phœbus among gods.' Walpole might have said with equal truth that his fall was the work of no single or common opposition. The discontented Whigs singly could not have overthrown him; the Tories could not have singly made or held the breach; the voice of the nation was the voice of a trumpet giving an uncertain sound, and alone it would not have tumbled down the walls and battlements of his administration. The Bill for the repeal of the Septennial Act was a stumbling-block to the Whigs; the motion for an increase of income to the Prince of Wales was an offence to the Tories. Whigs and Tories had been for once unanimous in their demand for war, and Walpole had conceded war against Spain. But the prime minister still sat secure and smiling:—

'Duris ut ilex tonsa bipennibus

*Per damna, per cædes, ab ipso
Ducit opes animumque ferro.'*

But these discords were at length fused by the furnace of a common hatred of Walpole into a momentary union. Beside the Whig and Tory factions, there stood in that day a young England ('the boys,' as Sir Robert called them), though it did not inscribe the name on its frontlets and phylacteries. The scribes in the pay of the Treasury were, as compared with the writers on the side of the Opposition, what the Genoese archers at Cressy had been as compared with the English bowmen. Their bow-strings were slack, their arrows fell short of the mark; while the cloth-yard shafts of their opponents struck like iron sleet on the faces of the Cabinet, or rather on the devoted front of its leader. For his solitary position Walpole had himself in great measure to thank. Cæsar, with a blind confidence in destiny, dismissed his body-guard. Walpole, careless of money, was covetous of power, and would sooner front a powerful opposition than brook divided allegiance among his followers. To his opponents he had been uniformly merciful, although he held in his hands their correspondence with the Pretender. But he had not been equally lenient to the members of his government, and had cashiered them in batches whenever they would not submit to his will. He had thus been for years feeding the opposition ranks, so that when the Whigs, the Tories, and the ablest speakers and writers of the age at length combined against him, they found him nearly as solitary in the breach as that centurion of Cæsar's who drew from his single buckler the heads of more than two hundred Pompeian javelins. No arts were too mean, no reports

too monstrous, no hopes were too extravagant to be employed against the now tottering minister. He was Wolsey and Sejanus. He was the enchanter who had spoiled the monarchy of its comeliness. His fall would inaugurate a golden age. His punishment would be more salutary for the nation than that of Strafford. With him was war to the knife: for his colleagues, if only they would consent to abandon him, there were held out hopes of pardon for past offences, and the more attractive lure of favours to come. 'Down with Walpole!' was the universal chorus in Parliament and out of Parliament. From Norfolk House, from the cider counties, from those who fattened on army contracts, from those who drank port in the common-rooms of Oxford, from the sheep-farmers of the Cotswold Hills, from two-thirds of the parochial clergy, from two-thirds of the landed gentry, even from many of the turnip-growers of Norfolk was heard the cry,

———'Curramus præcipites et
Dum jacet in ripa calcemus Cæsaris hostem.'

Cæsar regretted, and the nation had little cause to rejoice, in the retirement of Walpole; nor beyond the moment of triumph had his immediate adversaries much to plume themselves upon. The threatened impeachment, after hanging over him for some months, came to nothing. The fancied Sejanus had been either innocent of any great offence, or wary in leaving tracks of his guilt. The Opposition could neither agree upon the articles of attainder nor upon anything else. The resignation of their common enemy let loose again the winds of faction, and Eurus and Notus, after their brief imprisonment, blew more vehemently than ever. Walpole had confronted his foes manfully, and, as was his wont, cheerfully. When at last overborne he retired with dignity, and amid his pictures and a few faithful friends at Houghton, pitied rather than envied the Pelhams and Carterets, nor ever, as it seems, cast a longing look upon Downing Street. But the enmities which the father declined to foster, were carefully cherished by the son. 'All his father's foes,' Mr. Cunningham remarks, 'were his foes. He may have had a temporary liking for a few who disliked his father, but the old hatred returned, and may be read unmistakably in his *Memoires* and *Letters*.' His hatreds, it might have been added, rendered his '*Memoires*' unsafe guides to the historian, who is not prepared to love or hate as Walpole prescribes. On the love of the reader he indeed makes but slight demands: seldom has the '*nil admirari*' maxim been so sedulously observed; rarely has Oxenstiern's no less famous remark on the

little wisdom which governs the world, been so generally seconded as in these fancy portraits of the statesmen of the eighteenth century. Nor are statesmen alone assailed by this epistolary Lucilius. His own family is not spared; churchmen are not revered; seceders from the establishment fare no better than its ministers. If the elder Pitt was more fit to rant at Bartholomew Fair than to address a deliberative assembly, if of the Townshends one was a backbiter, the other a jack-pudding, so also was Washington a Captain Bobadil, Whitfield an impostor, and at times a swindler, and the primate of all England, Secker, an atheist. The *virus* of the Walpolean pen is more apparent, because it is more concentrated, in his formal historical works than in his familiar letters. Yet the readers of the latter had a fair excuse for believing at one time that the sententious railer, Junius, was no other than Walpole himself.

‘Well, here I am to enjoy it!’ was the philosophic observation of Lord Orford, while exhibiting Houghton to a friend. Of all persons affected by his fall, he was perhaps the least so. The hours sometimes passed heavily, for years of labour and hard living had told on his constitution, and as he had never taken delight in books, and had no intention of being his own chronicler, the consolations of Cicero and Clarendon in exile were denied him. Yet his pictures were a constant source of delight, and his spirits rose with fine weather. The proceedings of the ‘Secret Committee to inquire into the conduct of the Earl of Orford,’ drew him occasionally from his retirement; but with each visit to London his popularity increased; his levees were crowded—he was well received at court—he was respectfully followed at Ranelagh—he greeted, and was greeted cheerfully by, his supplanters—even the London mob, which in April 1742 had borne him in effigy to Tower Hill, soon permitted his coach to pass unnoticed.

At this period we obtain from Horace Walpole’s letters, glimpses of life at Houghton. Norfolk did not find favour in his eyes. His father’s estate lay in one of the least desirable parts of the county. It bore turnips well, but ‘you might gallop over it without meeting a tree.’ Woolterton, the seat of his uncle ‘Old Horace,’ pleased him better: ‘it was all wood and water.’ Could he indeed now revisit the glimpses of the moon, Walpole might still applaud the turnips, but would not complain of the want of trees in Norfolk. The appetites of his father’s guests astounded him; their conversation wearied him. He describes a dinner at Houghton, as Farquhar describes the plenty at Sir Tunbelly Clumsy’s mansion in Wiltshire—

'I here every day see,' he writes to Mr. Chute, 'men who are mountains of roast beef, and only seem just roughly hewn out into the outlines of human form, like the giant-rock at Pratolino. I shudder when I see them brandish their knives in act to carve, and look on them as savages that devour one another. I should not stare at all more than I do, if yonder alderman at the lower end of the table was to stick his fork into his neighbour's jolly cheek, and cut a brave slice of brown and fat.' . . . 'They say there is no English word for *ennui*. I think you may translate it most literally by what is called "entertaining people," and "doing the honours:" that is, you sit an hour with somebody you don't know, and don't care for, talk about the wind and the weather, and ask a thousand foolish questions, which all begin with, "I think you live a good deal in the country," or, "I think you don't love this thing or that." Oh! 'tis dreadful.'

So Walpole wrote nearly a generation before Cowper glanced at similar inconveniences in his poem of 'Conversation.' The hours at Houghton did not, however, all pass so tediously. A high authority (Lord John Russell) has said that Horace Walpole never possessed his father's confidence. While in office the self-confident statesman may not have consulted a youth from Cambridge, or considered that the mere circumstance of being member for Callington was sufficient to render a young man of four-and-twenty a Burleigh or a Somers. But that in his happier hours of retirement, Lord Orford imparted much past history to his son seems to us beyond a doubt.

Meanwhile the family circle at Houghton was not without its feuds. In that, as in other palaces, the '*solita inter fratres odia*' prevailed. Edward, the second son of Sir Robert, was jealous of the notice which Horace attracted: and so far did he carry this unamiable temper that Horace, who in his heart loved peace, though his tongue or his pen sometimes kindled war, was fain to entreat his father never to take notice of him in his brother's presence. He did Edward indeed the justice, both then and long afterwards when the brothers were not on speaking terms, to admit that he of all the children loved Sir Robert best; and if a letter, assuredly not meant for the public eye, may be trusted, held out to him, in the very hottest of their disputes, the right hand of brotherhood. He also confesses to Mason that in 1741 Edward and not himself was the father's favourite. These glimpses at a better nature in Horace would be of little importance were he not so generally represented as devoid of feeling, and given up to malice and mocking.

The retirement of Lord Orford changed the current of his son's fortunes. It can hardly be doubted that he discerned in Horace the talents which make a parliamentary 'success,' and able administrators; and that on his younger son alone could he reckon for the perpetuation of his official name. But to such hopes the time was adverse. The Whigs were a party

divided against itself. The opposition numbered in its ranks some able and many turbulent members. If the father, a robust, fearless, and imperturbably good-humoured man, had with difficulty ruled the Commons, and had finally been carried away by the strength of the tide, what likelihood was there of the son, possessing neither the vigour nor the temper of his father, being able to ride the whirlwind and direct the storm. It was not the case of a Rehoboam succeeding a Solomon: since Rehoboam's menace to exchange rods for scorpions implies some strength of will, at least in purpose. It was rather a case resembling that of the son of the elder and greater Africanus, who, conscious of his inferiority in the arts of government, suffered strangers to enter upon his inheritance, and contemplated in retirement the clouds and currents of political parties. Disgust also at the faithlessness and ingratitude of many whom Sir Robert had raised to honour had its weight in determining Horace to abjure politics openly. It was not a noble, scarcely an honest resolve, since, without the burden of responsibility, he intermeddled for half a century to come in affairs of state, writing much in the newspapers, fanning, as we gather from his own 'Letters,' many a back-stairs intrigue, and speaking or writing evil of nearly every one not absolutely obscure or quite the *alter ego* of himself.

Yet, while we are of opinion that Horace should either have kept aloof from the political arena altogether or entered it as an athlete ready to strike and to be stricken, we must allow him the praise of sagacity, or even humanity, beyond that of most of his contemporaries. At the time when Lord Chatham, malignant to Lord North's cabinet in all other aspects, was with his last breath asserting the unlimited sovereignty of Great Britain over her colonies, Walpole was writing of the just and inevitable independence of America. He saw that the intervention of France in the American contest, in 1779, would recoil on herself: that the giving Irish Romanists the right to vote at elections must lead to the emancipation of Irish Romanism: that Parliamentary Reform must totally alter the character of the House of Commons: that the fashion of public meetings would materially affect the operations of government: that Lord Chatham was rather a brilliant meteor than a 'genuine luminary:' and that newspapers were rapidly becoming a check and counterpoise on cabinets, if not on Parliament itself. To his honour he expressed his indignation against negro-slavery before the names of Clarkson and Wilberforce were heard of: and equally to his honour he deplored that France, in her impatience of long-standing abuses, undermined the pillars of law and religion.

Of his parliamentary career it is scarcely necessary to speak.

Nature had not fitted him for oratory; but he probably would have proved an excellent debater, and by his shrewdness and caustic wit have been a useful member of the Whig light infantry. The few speeches of his which have been preserved were much admired at the time, even by many who disliked equally his name, his politics, and himself; and they warrant us in applying to his parliamentary eloquence Cicero's description of that of C. Julius: 'Orator fuit minime ille quidem vehemens, sed nemo urbanitate, nemo suavitate conditior: sunt ejus aliquot orationes ex quibus lenitas ejus sine nervis perspici potest.' He sat in Parliament, from 1741 to 1765, long enough, had inclination seconded his talents and opportunities, to have inscribed his name beneath that of his father, and above that of many inferior to himself in every respect, except in the gifts of energy and earnest purpose.

But whether it were by happy instinct or happy accident, the force of Walpole's intellect was thrown into his Correspondence. 'Hic currus et arma.' In his Letters is contained the patent of his perpetual fame. Whatsoever relates to them is curious; and we shall employ the space that remains to us with a brief account of their history and contents.

First, then, as regards the *number* of these letters, we believe it to be unprecedented and unsurpassed. Of Cicero, who, like Walpole, was a kind of Gazetteer to his friends, eight hundred and twenty-six letters in all have been preserved; but many of these are merely notes of a few lines each; some are official despatches; and some are copies of letters addressed to Cicero. Of the younger Pliny, who did not confine his correspondence to politics but wrote on various themes of horticulture, literature, and private business, two hundred and forty-seven letters have come down to us, exclusive of a collection of reports to Trajan upon his province of Bithynia. The other capital letter-writers of Rome—for the genuine letters of the Greeks would not occupy an octavo volume—even including the epistles of St. Jerome and St. Augustine, might be contained in one of these volumes, and the correspondence of the Christian fathers is swelled by pastoral charges and controversial pamphlets. Petrarch's and Politian's epistles might be comprised in a single volume, and some of these are dissertations rather than letters proper. The letters of Erasmus would demand little more space. Reuchlin, Ulric von Hutten, and Muretus combined, did not write as much in this kind as Erasmus; three or four octavos suffice for the letters of Lord Chesterfield and Lady Mary Wortley Montagu respectively; and Pope, Swift, and the elder Sheridan together, did not produce as many epistles as Walpole indited to Conway

alone. Gray and Gibbon are even more sparing of paper; and Cowper, to whom his correspondence stood in the place of conversation, did not, during his thirty-five years of seclusion, sign and seal a fourth part of the number of letters published by Walpole himself or his successive editors. He rightly termed correspondence the business of his life, and few workmen have been more diligent in their vocation.

The arrival and departure of the post were indeed little less important events in a Walpolian day than they are in the bureau of a Secretary of State. For fifty years not a week elapsed, rarely more than three or four days, without his despatching a letter. In the brief intervals between his letters he meditated on anecdotes, scandal, or news for the next batch. He made brief memoranda if not rough drafts. He wrote with the greatest ease with company in the room and even talking to people at the time. It cannot be said that his activity in writing was stimulated by his correspondents generally. 'West and Gray excepted, they were,' says Mr. Cunningham, 'dull masters in the art of letter-writing.' Montagu he himself calls an abominable correspondent, who only wrote to beg letters. Cole was a mere Dryasdust; his learning was useful, his manner must have been insufferably tedious to his friend. Bentley's letters were destroyed by Walpole, probably because of their 'poverty in manner and in matter.' Mason was an exception to the rule that good poets usually write good prose: his epistolary style is stiff, '*sermoni propior*,' 'properer for a sermon' as Charles Lamb interprets Horace's Latin. Madame du Deffand did not hold the pen of Madame de Sévigné, nor Lady Ossory that of Lady Mary Montagu—Lord Hertford and his brother wrote like men whose talk was of bullocks—Sir Horace Mann's letters are 'absolutely unreadable.' Walpole, when he compared his own productions with those of his friends, may fairly have divined his own immortality in the branch of literature to which he devoted himself.

The various letters republished, augmented and arranged in the edition before us, amount to the astonishing number of two thousand six hundred and sixty-five, and it is probable that this sum does not express the total produce of Walpole's pen. His friends were mostly, but not universally, careful in preserving them. West and Gray, as he observed to Mason, were good-natured enough to destroy his letters. Of his correspondence with Madame du Deffand, a few fragments only have been recovered. Those which he addressed to Mrs. Damer were, with the rest of her papers, burnt by her own desire; and those to Mrs. Clive, though returned to him by her brother at her death, are not now known to exist. Mr. Cunningham infers that from his near

neighbourhood to the lady they were 'of little moment.' But this conclusion is not consistent with another passage in the preface to his ninth volume, in which he says that Lady Ossory observed that when they were near neighbours in town, if Walpole had anything to say that he thought might be worked into an agreeable letter, Walpole would omit to pay her his customary visit. May he not, under similar temptations, have forborne his morning call or his evening loo at Kitty Clive's?

The general excellence of Walpole's letters, if we take it into account how rare and how difficult a thing it is to do with spirit what we do daily, to control ungenial moods, to command the befitting temper, to hit the proper vein, to resist indolence and carelessness, to avoid writing for writing's sake, is not less remarkable than their number. No man ever wrote so much and inflicted so little tediousness. We are not prepared to deny that his letters betray 'malice, evil speaking, and uncharitableness;' that the mood of to-day is not always the mood of to-morrow; that he often prefers a jest to a friend; that his literary judgments have been often set aside; or that he expended on comparative trifles the leisure and the abilities that were intrusted to him for higher ends. But while we admit more than perhaps Mr. Cunningham will thank us for admitting against Walpole, we claim for him—and in his department of literature this is a transcendant merit—that he is never dull.

It is not easy to define wherein consists the especial charm of his letters, so generally are the elements of attraction diffused over their surface or inwoven in their texture. He is rather susceptible of wit in others than witty himself; he is rather a recipient of humour than actually humorous. His sayings are not the sayings of Selwyn, Jekyll, or Sheridan. He is an admirable reporter of things to be remembered; he rarely writes what is really memorable for its own weight or point. His style, again, is far from faultless; its gallicisms are beyond the gallicisms of Hume and Gibbon: he often employs phrases which distress equally the French Academy and John Bull. Gray accused Walpole of interlarding with parliamentary idioms his 'Royal and Noble Authors;' the attentive reader of his letters may with equal justice accuse him of distorting or diluting the king's English. Yet while we concede that in all Walpole's literary productions there is partial evil, we maintain that there is a universal spirit of buoyancy and elegance, of good sense and shrewd insight which, in combination, render his Letters the most instructive and agreeable manual of the history of the eighteenth century.

It is by no means easy to classify Horace Walpole's letters

under distinct heads as grave or gay—as relating to the business or to the trifles of an hour, to politics, learning, art, or scandal, to matters proper to the Walpoles or common to mankind. It would be still less easy within our limits to give any characteristic samples of them, which would not, in fact, amount to a ‘Walpoliana.’ The threads of his several works are so interwoven with one another that it is impossible to separate them without injury to the entire woof. He sometimes moralises in Seneca’s vein, sometimes rivals Anthony Wood or Elias Ashmole in the triviality of what he records: and at others he doubts, balances, and egotises after the manner of Montaigne. The letters to General Conway, his near relation, and, among his own sex, his dearest friend, are the most easy and natural, yet perhaps the least generally amusing of the whole. Conway was no whetstone for wit, and had small sympathy with Walpole’s pursuits. His correspondent accordingly is, when writing to him, comparatively frugal of anecdotes and gossip, and reticent about his antiques and improvements at Strawberry Hill. With Lady Hervey, Lady Suffolk, and Lord Strafford, he is uniformly on his best behaviour. The *very fine gentleman* impairs the ease of the writer. As far as regards politics, the letters to Lord Hertford, as far as they go, are among the most valuable. Nor are they deficient in ease nor in a certain warmth of attachment, though both are tempered by deference to the personal and political rank of the ambassador and viceroy. To Gray, Mason, and Pinkerton he writes on literature, to Cole and Zouch on antiquities, with Hannah More he is always in a moralising, sometimes almost in a pious, vein. Through his correspondence with the Miss Berrys there runs a vein of something like paternal affection mingled with touches of sentimental emotion. To Montagu he relates with inexhaustible liveliness and wit the news of the day and the gossip of the town, in a tone of freedom and even levity derived from their boyish days at Eton. The letters to Sir Horace Mann are in a somewhat different strain from those which he addressed to other correspondents, and the difference may be ascribed to their brief intimacy at Florence, to their life-long separation after the autumn of 1741, and to the circumstance that he stood to Mann, expatriated at Florence, in the relation of an historiographer, proper and personal. Distance of space, although, as we have already seen in the case of Lady Ossory, not indispensable to Walpole, is generally an essential condition of a correspondence which shall instruct or amuse. It is not usual, nor, indeed, easy to write to a friend in the next street, or in a neighbouring town or village. Distance of time, on the other hand, between the opening and the closing

of a correspondence, is much less advantageous to the writer or the reader of letters. At first, and for many years to come, Sir Horace Mann took a lively interest in England and the English. A jest which sparkled freshly in London early in the month had not lost all its effervescence when it reached Florence at the end of it. Mann had left behind him many friends, and he was pleased to hear, at brief periods, of their welfare: was pleased still to smile at their follies, and perhaps enjoyed his own repose on the banks of the Arno all the more from contrasting it with the feuds and factions which prevailed on the banks of the Thames. But Mann remained voluntarily abroad for a much longer period than many persons are enforced to dwell in Siberia or New South Wales. The fathers whom he had known died off: the beauties whom he had admired became matrons and grandmothers: a generation which knew him not was bustling or idling in parliament and the clubs; and while his curiosity, on the one hand became feebler, Walpole's zeal in recording events, though he was the most unwearied of reporters, grew, on the other hand, less active, and their correspondence was nearly dying of age. Walpole was well aware that his letters to Mann in 1786, could not be what his letters had been in 1743, and he thus, at different seasons, admits and deploras the senescence of his pen.

'As by your desire I write more frequently than formerly, you must be content with shorter letters; for distance and absence deprive us of the little incidents of common correspondence. I am forced to write to you of such events only as one would write to posterity. One cannot say, "I dined with such a person yesterday," when the letter is to be a fortnight on the road; still less when you know nothing of my Lord or Mr. Such-an-one whom I should mention.

'My friendship for you makes me persist in our correspondence; but I wait for events, that I may send you something. . . My society is grown very narrow, and it is natural at sixty-three not to concern myself in the private history of those that might be my grandchildren.

'Adieu! my dear sir. Shall not we be very venerable in the annals of friendship? What Orestes and Pylades ever wrote to each other for four and-forty years without once meeting?

From his letters alone we might have formed no very inadequate notion of Horace Walpole. Our speculations would have been aided by the pictures of fine gentlemen by Hogarth, by a few passages from Young's satires, from a few scenes in once fashionable comedies, and by what fiction and history alike tell of the courts, coteries, and clubs of the Georgian era. Our sketch, however, would have resembled in one respect Zeuxis's famous picture of Helen. The fairest of Achaian dames was in her portrait composed of the several charms of the most beautiful of

Grecian matrons and maidens: the familiar gazetteer of the eighteenth century would have been portrayed from a *cento* of his own sketches and confessions. Fortunately we are spared the trouble and the errors of such a fancy portrait by the information supplied by one who had seen and known the original. And this sketch from the life is the more valuable since it comes from a lady's hand, and is, accordingly, marked by all the nice observation of her sex. Miss Hawkins, luckily for her own generation and the present, published the reminiscences of her early abode at Twickenham, and has thus delineated the lord of Strawberry Hill as he looked and lived about the year 1772—

‘His figure was not merely tall, but more properly long and slender to excess: his complexion, and particularly his hands, of a most unhealthy paleness. His eyes were remarkably bright and penetrating, very dark and lively: his voice was not strong, but his tones were extremely pleasant, and, if I may so say, highly gentlemanly. I do not remember his common gait: he always entered a room in that style of affected delicacy, which fashion had then made almost natural: *chapeaux bras* between his hands, as if he wished to compress it, or under arm; knees bent, and feet on tiptoe as if afraid of a wet floor. His dress in visiting was most usually, in summer, when I most saw him, a lavender suit, the waistcoat embroidered with a little silver or of white silk worked in the tambour, partridge-silk stockings and gold buckles, ruffles and frills generally lace. I remember, when a child, thinking him very much under-dressed, if at any time, except in mourning, he wore hemmed cambric. In summer no powder, but his wig combed straight, and showing his very smooth, pale forehead, queued behind; in winter, powder.’

Had this been all we knew of Horace Walpole, he would have ranked with the tribe ‘maccaroni,’ and might have been presumed one of the originals who sat for Sheridan’s ‘Sir Benjamin Backbite.’ But he was not properly effeminate; and, indeed, except in the peculiarities of his gait and dress, approached much nearer than most of his contemporaries in the upper classes of society to the simpler manners of the present day. He avoided the long and elaborate dinners of London, as he disliked the Norfolk beef-eaters at Houghton. His out-door habits were even hardy. Cole records his antipathy to a greatcoat; and in his grounds at Strawberry Hill he dispensed with a hat even in winter. His frequent attacks of gout afforded him a decent pretext for abstinence from hot and rebellious liquors, from the seas of claret which then circulated after dinner, and the reeking punch-bowl which came after the broiled bones at supper. The wine he drank was during dinner; but he diluted it, after the manner of the ancients and of the very moderns, with iced water. His dinner-hour was generally at four o’clock; which, however, was already become antiquated in 1789, and liable to invasion from morning callers. His diet was light, and

savoured of the chronic invalid; and his morning meal was shared with a favourite dog and squirrel. Pattipan and Tonton, indeed, are immortal in his letters; and although Walter Scott was attended by a nobler pack than 'these curled darlings' of the canine species, yet fondness for his dumb friends is one of the pleasing traits in Walpole's character. On the grave questions of early rising and late vigils he was of Lamb's opinion, who held the one an impertinence, the other a privilege. 'My general hours of composition,' he says, 'are from ten o'clock at night till two in the morning, when I am sure not to be disturbed by visitants.' Yet by thus reversing nature's order, he perhaps increased, in spite of his abstinence, his constitutional tendency to gout. For more than half his life he was enfeebled by that disease, an heirloom, probably, of the less temperate habits of his progenitors. It affected his hands as well as his feet; and 'latterly his fingers were swelled and deformed, having, as he would say, more chalk-stones than joints in them,' and adding, with a smile, 'that he must set up an inn, for he could chalk a score with more ease and rapidity than any man in England.'

Time doubtless softened much of the asperity in Walpole's disposition; for that there was in him a root of bitterness, neither his writings permit us to doubt, nor the fact recorded of his laugh, that 'it was forced and uncouth'—how unlike the hearty chuckle of Sir Robert!—and of his smile, that 'it was not the most pleasing.' Political aversions, however—and the majority of Walpole's aversions grew from that seed—droop and dwindle under lengthened days. He might despise Lord North, but he could not hate him as he had hated the Duke of Newcastle: he might recoil from the Grenvilles, but not as he had once recoiled from Carteret and Lord Bath. His father's enemies, after life's fitful fever, slept secure from his envy and opposition: they had bequeathed their traditional feuds and jealousies to the Whig and Tory statesmen of another generation; but to men who were sitting in the sixth forms of Eton or Westminster, when Walpole was speaking in the House of Commons in defence of Sir Robert, he could not cherish the animosity which filled his breast towards the Pelhams. 'Non eadem est ætas, non mens.' The Nestor of the Whigs occasionally hurled his javelin at the younger Pitt and Fox, but with an arm no longer nerved by personal as well as party hostility. Were it through the feebleness or the wisdom of years, the infirmities of his temper were softened by time, and the friends who cherished his narrative old age had seldom reason to complain of coldness or caprice. We have described Wal-

pole as one neither worthy of much respect, nor capable of awakening or returning warm affection. Yet owing to him, in common with all who have been instructed and amused by his Letters, no slight debt of gratitude, we will close our imperfect sketch of his character in the words of a friend who to unusual opportunities for observation added a large understanding, much experience of life, and the pure and cordial feelings of refined womanhood.

In reply to the accumulated charges of 'affectation,' 'insincerity,' 'caprice,' and even 'treachery,' which had been brought against him, Miss Mary Berry rejoins in her 'Advertisement' to the letters addressed by Walpole to her sister and herself:—

'He affected nothing: he played no part: he was what he appeared to be. Aware that he was ill qualified for politics, for public life, for parliamentary business, or, indeed, for business of any sort, the whole tenor of his life was consistent with this opinion of himself. Had he attempted to effect what belongs only to characters of another stamp; had he endeavoured to take a lead in the House of Commons; had he sought for place, dignity, or office; had he aimed at intrigue, or attempted to be a tool for others; then, indeed, he might have deserved the appellation of artificial, eccentric, and capricious.

'Lord Orford is believed by his critic to have "sneered" at everybody. Sneering was not his way of showing dislike. He had very strong prejudices, sometimes adopted on very insufficient grounds, and he therefore often made great mistakes in the appreciation of character; but when influenced by such impressions, he always expressed his opinions directly, and often too violently.

'The affections of his heart were bestowed on few; for in early life they had never been cultivated, but they were singularly warm, pure, and constant; characterised not by the ardour of passion, but by the constant preoccupation of real affection. . . The dread which he is supposed to have had, lest he should lose caste as a gentleman, by ranking as a wit and an author, he was much too *fine a gentleman* to have believed in the possibility of feeling. He knew he had never studied since he left college; he knew that he was not at all a learned man; but the reputation that he had acquired by his wit and by his writings, not only among fine gentlemen, but with society in general, made him nothing loath to cultivate every opportunity of increasing it.'

If we have taken, on the whole, a more favourable view of the best and most voluminous of English letter-writers than has since the publication of most of them been in fashion, we are content to err with Mary Berry and Sir Walter Scott. We have endeavoured to judge him by the light which his circumstances afford, and not by the measure of a better age. His reputation may stand higher or lower than it has yet stood; but his name is as certain to endure in its peculiar niche of literature, as that of any of the men who played an evil or a good part in the Georgian era; nor is it probable that any further documentary evidence will materially alter the estimation which, apart from party feelings, the public has already pronounced on Horace Walpole.

VIII.

CIVILIZATION IN RUSSIA.

Essai sur l'Histoire de la Civilisation en Russie. Par Nicholas de Gerebtzoff. Paris: Amyot.

M. DE GEREBTZOFF, a Russian gentleman who has served his country with some distinction during his life, has lately consecrated his leisure to an essay on its civilization. There is no doubt that the work was wanted. The best descriptions by the most accurate travellers, such as Kohl and Haxthausen, are too prolix and too unconnected to supply the place of hand-books to the empire. The good histories are all long, and the short are all bad. The case is even worse as regards Russian literature, for Talvi's, the only modern manual, is little more than a catalogue raisonné of the most important names. M. de Gerebtzoff was in some respects well qualified to supply the want. He has served in the Russian army, and has been governor of a province. Belonging to the Old Russian party, he takes an especial interest in institutions of local growth. The village communes and the orthodox church, are subjects which he has studied, and on which he loves to dwell. His book deserves to be read, but it cannot be trusted implicitly: it is an imitation of M. Guizot's 'Civilization in France;' and, unfortunately, the Russian copyist is quite ignorant of the real history of the nations of Western Europe. He is therefore little more than a Caleb Balderstone of literature, audacious in assertion, skilful in manipulating facts, and all the while degrading the grandeur of honourable poverty into the beggarly make-shifts of a false position. Such a writer is the worst apologist whom Russia could have found at the present time: her reforms are beyond all praise; but her actual position is certainly semi-barbarous. Yet it is very possible that M. de Gerebtzoff has mistaken a vicious subtlety for philosophical thought, and the prejudices of a long life for inductions. 'Our old institutions and free thought,' is the watchword of more than one party at the present day.

M. de Gerebtzoff starts of course with the definition to which his facts are to be squared. Civilization, he says, is the sum of sound knowledge, sound thought, and good intention in a body politic. England is imperfectly civilized, because the distribution of knowledge is imperfect, and a true religious sentiment

can scarcely be said to exist. This deficiency is shown by our jealousy of foreign nations, and by our conduct to the conquered Sepoys. However, Englishmen possess eminently the deductive and comparative faculties, and the organ of creativity. France is higher in the educational scale than England; but it wants men of special culture; and knowledge has a tendency to accumulate in the upper classes of society. The Frenchman is rather analytical than deductive, and rather imaginative than creative. The nation is quite deficient in the religious element, which has been destroyed, not indeed by sectarian bigotry but by false philosophy. Germany takes the highest rank among the states of Western Europe: its people, though too speculative, are well educated, and the moral and religious elements are strengthened throughout the country by the conclusions of philosophy. This audacious chain of paradoxes is intended of course to point to the inference that Russia is still more highly civilized than Germany. But we dare not altogether anticipate; there are still two volumes between the reader and the last sophism: M. de Gerebtzoff has felt that the work of inverting a pyramid must be done gradually.

As mere indications of thought these first pages are the most important in the book. The New Zealander, who is to sit in triumph on the ruins of St. Paul's will scarcely be more unconscious of the memories he desecrates, than M. de Gerebtzoff is of the civilization that surrounds him. We must not apologise for England, though we think that British revenge in India has been less bloody and more justifiable than was the late Czar's religious crusade against Turkey. We join issue on the question of France and Germany. It is perhaps true that there is no country in Europe, unless it be Scotland, in which so large a per centage of natives can read and write as in Germany; there is certainly none which possesses so many scholars, metaphysicians, and men of science. In no other country, perhaps, has the language of sentiment and philosophy overflowed so largely into the channels of ordinary worship. These are facts which can be tabulated and summed up. But even German philosophy has been sterile during the last thirty years; German poetry lies in the grave of Goethe, and for every other department of thought the students are mere intellectual Gibeonites, who hew wood and draw water for their neighbours. Could a commission be appointed to analyze and codify the new ideas of the present and the last generation, it need scarcely extend its labours east of the Rhine. Oken against St. Hilaire and Cuvier; Raumer and Ranke against Michelet, Guizot, and De Tocqueville; and the Frankfort Diet against the National Assembly—the contrast

would be too unequal. But even these are not the real points of comparison. France is in fact a federation of little social commonwealths; and thought and speech, which the empire tries to proscribe, are irresistibly vital in the *salons*. A nation which can converse as well as think has at least a century of social development in advance of its silent neighbours. Besides, there is still a generation in France which remembers that it has once exercised the rights of citizenship; even under the present régime, religious thought and faith are transitionally free. Little as all this is, it cannot be said for Germany. It has had one interval of freedom during its great struggle against the first Napoleon, and one fever-fit of anarchy during 1848. Except for these traditions there is no Saxon or Prussian who has any notion of political life; he only knows that he is registered at his birth, inscribed on various lists of the state as he grows up, and connected inextricably and mysteriously with a dozen state chanceries and police bureaus. Protestants are persecuted in Austria; Old Lutherans in Prussia; and German Catholics everywhere. Hence, in spite of a few meteoric thinkers, and many normal schools, civilization stagnates in Germany. The best system of intellectual drill in countries where drill is the final end of life, can only make rigid the man whom it ought to discipline. There are many thousand mandarins of the various classes in China, who are better trained than the Demos of Athens was; Phylæ and Phratries cannot compare with the compact organization of the Celestial Empire; but is China a greater name in the world than ancient Greece has been? Is it the progress of the last three centuries that is at fault? or is it M. de Gerebtzoff, who has blundered in supposing that life is a sum of exact intellectual processes? Is not action the noblest product, as well as the test of thought?

The notion that knowledge is the better half of progress lies at the root of all M. de Gerebtzoff's historical misconceptions. He dwells with evident delight on the early ages of Russian history. His facts are sufficiently plausible. Novgorod was a great city, with enormous commerce and a code of laws. Throughout Russia there was a priesthood, who had of course received a certain education, and who have left behind them a number of theological treatises. The Prince Vladimir Monomachus composed a will, of which M. de Gerebtzoff has given a slightly-garbled extract, and which contains some excellent sentiments of morality. It is known that the Russians could cast metals, could paint in the Byzantine style, and that they possessed a national music. Consequently it is inferred that between the eighth and thirteenth centuries, when all prosperity was destroyed

by the Tartar invasion, the Russians were in a higher state of civilization than the nations of the West. Lest there should be any doubt, M. de Gerebtzoff quotes a description of the Middle Ages from Chateaubriand. Dissolute priests, barbarous nobles, and an oppressed peasantry, are the principal figures in the historical tableau. By their side a few great names are introduced. The Song of the Niebelungen is quoted as a mediæval production; and Machiavel and Leonardo da Vinci are inscribed on the catalogue of celebrities. Particular justice is done to the universities. But all the knowledge, we are told, was purchased at the expense of faith, and all the political unity with the loss of liberty. It is difficult to attack errors which are the sole foundation of argument. It would be easy to prove separately that the peasants, whom M. de Gerebtzoff pitied, were organized throughout Europe between 800 and 1300 on the precise model of the village communes that now exist in Russia, and whose form he considers exemplary. The secular knowledge of the times was imperfect, chiefly because it was limited by the conditions of theological inquiry. With every allowance for the exaggeration of our records, it is certain that the universities and schools were attended by more than a cultivated minority of the upper classes; all the clergy, all the professions, half the gentry, and a host of vagrant literati and hedge-schoolmasters, were the learned commonwealth of Europe. Thus far then the comparison is at least not against us, although we know exactly what our own ancestors were, and are not reduced to conjectural reconstructions of society. But even this is an imperfect statement of the question. All M. de Gerebtzoff's proofs are against him. Novgorod was semi-civilized because it came in contact with the West of Europe; and Kieff, in the same way, caught the reflex and paler glory of Byzantine riches and thought. But the articles of export show that the Russians had not a single national manufacture at a time when steel weapons, clocks, woollen goods, the loadstone and gunpowder, had been added to the treasures of western trade. The codes of Yarosloff and Vladimir are not to be compared with the Welsh laws of Hoel Dha for comprehensiveness or systematic ability. Yet the Welsh, as a people, were behind the rest of Europe in real development. But in Wales a certain power of codification existed, and the glaring contrasts of thought and fact were never modified by a compromise, but concealed by new enactments. The whole question whether laws are evidence depends on the fact whether the ideal or the practical faculty predominates in society—whether they come to supply a want, or to model the state afresh. The Russian laws have a fatal minuteness, which

speaks ill for the character of their administrators. It is the common sign of a vicious society that its institutions should be made mechanical, because they are more trustworthy than its men. Nor are we allowed to doubt that this was the case. The will of Vladimir Monomachus was written in 1125, and abounds with maxims of morality. These maxims would have been absurd if they had really formed part of the habitual morals of the people. A prince who exhorts his children not to put the innocent to death must have known that the innocent had no protection from the laws. The advice to avoid purveyance may be fairly set against the law of Canute, which forbids it. The evil was rooted in both countries; but in Russia it could only be blamed as unroyal, and in England it was illegal. Vladimir himself, who had made eighty-three campaigns, and had executed or drowned two hundred princes of his enemies, was surely a little late in his recognition of morality. But there is a parallel in our own history. William the Conqueror, on his deathbed, repented the unjust violence of the conquest of England, and left the country in the hands of God,—and of his son.

The chief effect of the Tartar invasion was to consolidate the political unity of Russia, and to exalt the strong sentiment of attachment to the Orthodox Church. Indirectly it perhaps promoted the formation of village communes, as the conquerors found it easier to impose taxes upon corporations than upon individuals. But the institution is, in fact, one which has existed in every semi-civilized country. Given a weak central power and a turbulent nobility, how are the rights of property to be secured, and the dues of the state collected? The problem has been answered everywhere in the states of modern Europe by the organization of a district-police in the villages. It would even be easy to prove that the English frith-guilds of the time of Athelstane were more efficiently constituted than the village communes of modern Russia. The societies of Oxford or Cambridge, for instance, were not only a police for the property of the district: they assured their members against the risk of fire, the expenses of travel, and the chances of poverty and sickness; they paid the legal fines which had not been incurred wantonly; they buried the dead, and caused masses to be said for their souls. The village court was supreme in the minor questions of law; and the village answered to the crown for all offences of its members against the state. The difference in all this, from the functions of the Russian Meers, is very slight, and is in favour of our Saxon ancestors. The Meers are only obliged to support the poor, and they are subject to the police of the government. M. de Gerebtzoff is no doubt right in calling

attention to them as a fact of interest; but the chief interest is to see how an institution, which died out amongst ourselves by the time of Richard II. at the latest, is still in full force in the east of Europe. The only peculiarities of the Russian system are vicious. Its decisions are made by acclamation, and not by counting heads, or by property or class qualifications. A method more calculated to destroy independence of character, and the natural prestige of talent and industry, could scarcely be combined with the forms of self-government. It is the more dangerous, because the commune can expel a refractory member; and the man who is thus punished is regarded in Russia as a vagrant would be in England, and is deported by immemorial custom to Siberia. These symptoms of democratic tyranny are confirmed by the general spirit of socialism. There is no such thing as private property in the communes: the lands belong to all equally, and are divided afresh as convenience or necessity require. Of course this system presupposes an universal equality in the conditions of cultivation. No man will manure or erect farm-buildings on a ground which may be taken from him in a year. And the more energetic among the villagers, if they cannot obtain the official positions of starosta and burmistr, which secure them in the possession of their property, wander off to the towns to be employed as droschky-drivers or artizans, and are only connected with the communes by paying their dues and leasing out their holdings. The system must inevitably be destroyed when wealth and the appliances of wealth are introduced.

There is just another point which M. de Gerebtzoff's explanations have a little obscured. He is fond of asserting that serfdom was first made universal by Peter the Great, whom Slavenophiles, the Tories of Russia, detest as a reforming emperor. The gist of this accusation is, that although the crown serfs, whom the author insists on calling free peasants, were already at Peter's accession bound down to the soil, the serfs of the nobles were allowed to pass, under certain conditions, from one estate to the other. Some stress, too, is laid upon the fact that the distinction between serfs and slaves, the bond by accident and the bond inalienably, disappears in legal language under Peter. Now the first of these measures had become necessary, and had been introduced during the whole century which begins with Boris Godunoff. Its real objects no doubt were, like our own Statutes of Labourers, to regulate the distribution of labour, and to secure the gentry against the great nobles, who offered higher advantages to their dependants. Moreover, the obligation of the boyars to support their peasantry could never be placed on a

firm basis until the connection between lord and serf was insoluble. The change of designation is a fact that belongs to a special phase of history. There is more of good than of bad in it, for it indicates the disappearance of that species of slavery in which the man is a living chattel, whose life and honour are at his lord's disposal. But it scarcely denotes any real diminution of liberty.

'Cantabit vacuus coram latrone viator.'

The crown peasants, who suffered most by it, were already bound down to the soil, and taxed at the discretion of the state. Practically their property has always been regarded as their own. At most, therefore, they only lost the power of dividing their lands and of assessing their dues (powers which were restored to them in 1839). We do not pretend to defend the change, but we cannot consent to regard it as the introduction of slavery; and we cannot feel sure that it had not in reality been effected many years before the accession of Peter I. It only remains to correct a singular mistake of another kind. M. de Gerebtzoff has no doubt read in a manual that the serfs of feudal Europe had no property. He is here making the same confusion of serf and slave which he ascribes to Peter the Great. The feudal serf of the West could always redeem himself, if his owner consented, by the payment of money which, if M. de Gerebtzoff's theory were true, already belonged to his lord. The law protected him from robbery, and fixed the dues of inheritance which his successor was to pay. These laws were constantly infringed, but they existed none the less, and their principles triumphed finally.

A member of the Old Muscovite party must naturally regard Peter the Great with very mixed feelings. The administrative and warlike capacity of the great emperor cannot be denied; but he crushed the nobility, he secularized the church, he introduced foreign ideas; and all these reforms are bitter memories to his historian. The contrast of all these views with the common English estimate of Peter is remarkable. We think of him as an energetic and able savage, dazzled like a child by the powers and pomp of civilization, playing at the construction of a fleet for an empire which had scarcely a sea-coast; building his capital as an accessory to his marine in the frozen marshes of the north; reforming his people's manners by ukase and their morals by the knout, whilst his own convulsive and passionate nature was slowly wearing out the springs of an unwearied vitality. But Peter's nature was only samoiedic and barbarous by the grosser parts of it. No nation has less sentimental conservatism than the Russian: it is slow to change, merely because it is isolated from the causes of change, and rests, self-contained,

within its own immensity, knowing only the primæval traditions of its history. Peter, who is the typical man of his race, and who differed from his fellows simply by the inspiration of genius, perceived the absolute necessity of connection with the outer world. His conquests, his fleet, and St. Petersburg were so many struggles out of eastern darkness into light. Those who say that the foreign element absorbed and overpowered the national growth, should show that any real progress had been made in the century succeeding the death of Ivan the Terrible. The fact is, there is as yet no instance of any one people having civilized itself. The collision of Greek and Asiatic or Greek and Roman has been the starting-point of all progress for our race. So far as Russia was at all civilized at the time of Peter's accession, she owed it to Hanseatic trade, to intercourse with Byzantium, and to long wars against the Tartars and the Poles. But the only results of these influences had been political unity and the Orthodox faith. A people is not civilized because it is subject to one sovereign and has learned the catechism. Art, literature, the manners of refined society, a definite code of laws, manufactures, and roads were almost altogether wanting in the Russia of the seventeenth century. Under Peter the Great they appear, and have never since been destroyed. Is any one prepared to say that the examples of England, France, and Holland were not the immediate causes of this revolution? Could we ourselves even now afford to sacrifice the traditions of great thought and action which we embody? to destroy all record of the past, and trust to the future and our own right hands for progress? The greatest era of modern history is that which dates from the time when we began to understand not the law and religion, but the poets and thinkers of antiquity. It was no mere dream of Dante which showed him Virgil as the guide of those who travel to the light out of the depths of fire and mud.

In this sense, then, we think the most trifling or arbitrary edicts of Peter—the shaving his people's beards and the execution of his son—are to be explained and justified. Had he ever wavered in his preference of a civilized to a barbarous empire, he must have perceived that the time for a Russian Jenghis-Khan had gone by for ever. Villars, Eugène, and Marlborough were so many pledges for the West against an invasion. The Czar's path, therefore, was marked out by fate; the only question was whether any force from within could thrust him out of it. The Russian Church, encumbered with subtle distinctions and a multiform ritual, without education and without thought, was the natural enemy of reform. It is true that in a certain sense, as M. de Gerebtzoff argues, the clergy was always subject to the

state, and its patriarch was only the first subject. By the whole mediæval theory, the pope was the first subject of the empire, and Becket was the vassal of Henry II.; but although the oath of feudal homage was esteemed stronger than the sacrament of marriage, it never prevented the chiefs of the Church from asserting their liberty. Throughout Peter's reign the clergy detested his government, and were meditating or attempting revolt; powerless against him in the cabinet or the field, they interposed the shadow of religion between him and his first wife, and debauched the mind and character of his son. Never was conquest more necessary or more hardly won than that for which the blood of Alexis was shed. The destruction of the power of the nobility was the consummation of many years of imperial policy. By turns traitors or turbulent, they had proved unable to defend or to govern the kingdom. They had overlaid the pretensions of birth with a heraldry of inherited rank, until the highest offices of state, even command in war, had become the appanage of the families of chancellors and generals. That such pretensions had ever existed was in itself sufficient to condemn the order. But, above all, they had no real root in the soil. They themselves and their usurped privileges had mostly risen up over the fallen thrones of the Tartars. All history taught the people that they had been saved by their monarchs or by themselves. The Kremlins of the two Novgorods and of Moscow, and the walls of the Troïtza monastery, had witnessed the repulses of the two enemies of the faith; but not a spot hallowed by historical memories, can be found in Russia within the walls of a feudal castle. There is no record of an enduring nobility which has not taken for its motto '*noblesse oblige*;' and wherever the order has been true to itself, it does not rest with the fiat of a king to destroy it.

Of course M. de Gerebtzoff admires Catherine II. Her licentiousness is passed over unnoticed, and the murder of her husband he disbelieves. '*Nous n'avons que des récits du temps qui n'ont pour base que la rumeur publique; doit-on ajouter foi à des rumeurs qui circulent pendant des révolutions pareilles. Pas assez du moins pour avoir le droit de flétrir par l'accusation d'un crime atroce le mémoire d'une femme de génie, d'une grande souveraine.*' Peter III. died a few days after his imprisonment; his death could only be profitable to his wife, and was even necessary for her existence; her lover Orloff long afterwards avowed his share in it. But because Catherine codified the laws of her empire, extended its limits, and respected national institutions, she is to be held innocent in the face of all presumptive and positive evidence, in which vulgar logic of

imperialism the successful villain is justified upon two counts—he did not commit the crime, and he was right in committing it. The excuse for Catherine's bloody wars is that she found the frontiers of the empire weak in the West and towards the Caucasus. Ahab's frontier was weak, until Naboth's vineyard had been annexed. Of course it would be useless to deny the splendid success of that faithless and bloody policy, which reduced half of Poland, Kurland, the Crimea, Georgia, and Imeretia. But towards the west at least no strategical position had been gained, and a weak neighbour had been exchanged for two military monarchies. But for the partition of Poland, Russia might have spared an army of observation on the Austrian frontier during the last war. Above all Catherine's victories demoralised her nation for fifty years after her death. Her wars in spite of Suvaroff's capacity, had been chiefly a demonstration of the momentum of brute masses. No more fatal lesson could be taught to a brute people. All the triumphs of civilization seemed tame beside the lurid splendour of Praga and Ismail. The nation consented to forego its liberties, and to become a nursery and a camp of soldiers, whose standards were always pointing *εἰς τὴν πόλιν*. How that dream ended M. de Gerebtzoff and the Crimean dead know. The colossal power that had hung over Europe like an avalanche, found itself in the time of trial deserted by its allies, powerless against the shock of ideas, and compelled to purchase peace on the blasted ruins of its stronghold.

What permanent institutions did Catherine create? With the tact of a woman, she adapted Russian names to her councils and courts of justice. She conciliated the upper classes by investing them with the local magistrature of the country. It was a fearful power to confer upon slave-owners, whose revenge and oppression were now sanctioned by the State. It is no wonder that the smaller class of proprietors, the *odnodvortzi*, disappeared rapidly under this régime, or that later legislation has been compelled to take additional guarantees against the nobles. Feudalism without a free press must not be compared with the local magistrature of England. The codification of the laws was an idea natural to the encyclopædic spirit of the age: Louis XIV. and Frederick of Prussia had already given their names to two digests of national law; to take part in an encyclopædia or a code was as natural then, as it has since become to write a history of civilization. Catherine's celebrated Instructions are ~~chiefly borrowed from~~ *inspired* from Beccaria, and it is no doubt to her credit that they are a good model: the sentimental paragraphs, which a man who thinks religious, have clearly been

inspired by Rousseau. But the empress deserves the whole credit of one institution. She introduced paper-money into Russia; and under the ruinous prodigality of her régime silver soon disappeared, and the assignat replaced the metallic rouble at one fourth of its nominal value. Naturally the people forgot the existence of coined money, and for many years all calculations were based upon the paper-currency. M. de Gerebtzoff sees in this the convincing proof of its success as a national institution. What would he say to the 'shin-plaster' of the States, or to our own system of 'kites?' Push credit to its farthest point is the argument, and all the medium of exchange will consist in promissory notes, representing no certain value, more ideal than a metallic currency, more suggestive of faith, and more convenient for a pocket-book. We commonly call this sort of success bankruptcy.

In spite of her outward deference for national forms, Catherine kept her eye steadily upon Ferney and Versailles. She did little for the instruction of the people, but a great deal for science and the education of her nobility. The court had been European for half-a-century before her accession; but every province had its mass of country gentlemen, whose habits of life had remained unchanged pretty much since the days of Ivan the Terrible. The empress took some hundreds of girls from their families, gave them a thoroughly French education in the Smolnoi Institute, and then sent them back to their homes. 'Mostly,' says M. de Gerebtzoff, 'they were obliged to enter a society which was very inferior to them in refinement of culture. In these last cases these poor young ladies, from the moment they came out in society, were subjected to coarse treatment on the part of their parents, and a butt to offensive sarcasm from all about them: later on they exchanged this condition for a marriage, which often did not improve it, for most of the men who became their husbands were more or less simple men, without a refined education, and with sufficiently rustic habits. All these circumstances made these women the true victims of a progressively fermenting society, but these victims spread around them an atmosphere of civilization, which facilitated the progress of society. This result was foreseen by the great Catherine, and her previsions have been realised; for this institution was certainly more influential and more productive of general good than any that had been established up to that time. At the beginning of this century, in particular, it was easy to distinguish a young man whose mother had been a pupil of Smolnoi (the name commonly given to this school), from others whose mothers had not been there. It must not, however, be inferred from

what we have just said, that the society into which the young pupils of Smolnoi passed was in a state of barbarism, but only that its manners and habits were quite different from the French manners and habits of this period. The manners of country society in Russia were still at this time religious: people fasted during two hundred days of the year; they attended vespers and mass, a discipline to which the pupils of Smolnoi were little accustomed; the men amused themselves with riotous hunting-parties, and with libations in large assemblies, which were often unpleasant to the fair members of the family, and especially to the young persons in question, whose characters had been formed by the refined taste of the society of the Faubourg St. Germain: this occasioned sarcasms, misunderstandings, household quarrels, and miserable lives. In his eagerness to apologise for a society, which we are not to regard as barbarous, M. de Gerebtzoff has a little lost sight of his definition; at least it is not easy to perceive whether 'sound knowledge,' 'sound thought,' or 'good intentions,' would predominate among men who spent their lives in hunting, drinking, and going to church.

The last fifty years of Russian history are fresh in the memory of the world. A tremendous contest with France left Russia with the prestige of a matchless military power. No more miserable success could have happened for the nation. The well-meaning enthusiast, Alexander, perished under the weight of his own reforms. Perhaps, as M. de Gerebtzoff insinuates, he looked rather to glory and a quick success than to a work that should last through time; but his chief want was certainly that of genius. No man should attempt wholesale changes unless he possess the organising power to conceive them as a whole, or unless they have been designed by others, and require only to be touched into life by power. Hasty schemes, imperfectly carried out and soon abandoned, are the monuments of Alexander's reign. Yet it cannot be said that he lived to no purpose. The moral tone of the upper classes was raised, and freedom of thought began timidly to assert itself. Above all, the first great blow at serfdom was struck, and a protest against the institution itself was recorded, with some result upon men's consciences, as these later times have shown. Perhaps it was fortunate for the nation that its reforms were not forced upon it prematurely. Under the thirty years' reign of Nicholas it had leisure to try the worst experiment of politics, and to see how far an honest and able man could succeed in idealizing imperialism. M. de Gerebtzoff has a pardonable reverence for his late master, which we do not wish to attack. The facts of that unhappy reign are sufficiently notorious. The

Czar, in the language of his apologist, was 'penetrated by three ideas—orthodoxy, autocracy, nationality.' He established the first by a wholesale system of persecution, which is none the less true because individual facts in it have been exaggerated. But it was easier to drive two million Poles into the Orthodox Church than to stifle the traditions of freedom and of free thought in the empire. To make the nation a camp, in which every tenth man had a uniform, and to fill the *salons* and clubs with spies, are the vulgar devices of tyranny. Nicholas went further, and tried to strangle thought in its very cradle. Before his death he had almost destroyed the idea of a liberal education. Special studies at government-schools replaced everywhere the education of tutors at home and of the universities. But if men, who had been thus branded with the double eagle from their birth, forgot for a moment that they were government ware, and thought aloud, they were reduced to serve as common soldiers in the ranks, or were sent to die in Siberia. No doubt the national pride was exalted by a system which shut up Russia like Japan, and exchanged the hope of progress for a vision of conquered thrones. But nothing remains of all these dreams except the graves of the thousands who died to realize them ; and the greatest boast of Russian nationality at present is the splendid effort to reform its vicious institutions. Is there a thinking man in the empire who will wish ten years hence, who can seriously wish now, that the system of Nicholas had been perpetuated by a splendid triumph in the Crimean war ?

The most instructive part of M. de Gerebtzoff's book is his review of the present state of Russia. It is partial and superficial ; but the facts it gives will be new to most of his readers. Few, for instance, will be prepared to find an extensive list of newspapers and reviews, enjoying, in some instances, a circulation of from ten to fifteen thousand copies. The number of publications and subscribers has, of course, increased enormously since the death of the late emperor. M. de Gerebtzoff gives, at full length, the table of contents of one review, 'The Contemporary.' The single number quoted contains 668 pages, 50 of which are a translation from 'Little Dorrit,' 40 are the translation of a French article on Newton by Paul Rémusat, 88 are given to a Russian novel, 78 to historical and literary essays, as many more to a resumé of Russian news, whilst foreign countries and scientific discoveries come off with 52 and 49 pages respectively. The list of periodical publications is certainly a proud one taken altogether ; and when every allowance has been made for the absence of political discussion, and for the large plunder of foreign literature, it may still be contrasted triumphantly

with the present aspect of journalism in France. But is it safe to assert that 'journalism is the element of modern societies which, perhaps, best of all assigns the measure of the political development of a people?' M. de Gerebtzoff does not, and could not, claim for his country the freedom to discuss any large measures of internal reform unreservedly. All that can be said is that the limits of freedom are being enlarged, and that, in particular, foreign countries may be criticised. The rigid surveillance, by which Nicholas tried to conceal the fact that a revolution had broken out in Paris, is a mere memory of the past. But the interval between this and the freedom of the English public is immense. Probably, therefore, M. de Gerebtzoff speaks of the literary excellence of monthly and weekly journalism in Russia. But, to a great extent, the periodical press of a country flourishes on the ruin of works of permanent value; both because a well-written newspaper absorbs the whole literary power of its contributors, and because the public are not inclined to study in full and thoughtful books the facts of which they can get a lively rechauffé in two columns of a newspaper. America is a great instance of a country whose literary activity finds vent mostly in an ephemeral form; and the late illegal restraints upon the press in France have reacted in swelling the number of serious publications. Russia is an exceptional country, from the late era of her development. The class of country readers, who took in the 'World' and the 'Gentleman's Magazine' some hundred years ago in England, exists still in the great eastern empire. It is gratifying to find that they are so well provided for; but the sale of a single great history, or even of the works of a national poet, would afford a surer test of popular culture than the whole statistics of popular journalism can supply.

Great works, however, and especially great poems, are but few and far between in the annals of the country. Few foreign critics could be cited to endorse the opinion of M. de Gerebtzoff, that Lomonosoff, the real founder of Russian literature, has produced nothing that is not of the highest excellence. He is commonly regarded as a solid sensible man, with much of the encyclopædic talent of his age; but neither witty nor imaginative. Between him and the present century the name of Derjvine, the poetical moralist, is the only one that has passed the limits of the empire. Properly speaking, therefore, there are but two great names in the eighteenth century; and a national theatre did not even exist till 1752. Of course there is a long list of authors with panegyrical notices—*fortis Gyas, fortisque Cloanthus*; but they are only the mechanics of thought, not its artists

or prophets. M. de Gerebtzoff admits that Kreloff and Karamzine are the first truly national writers; and Kreloff owed his inspiration to the Fables of La Fontaine, whilst Karamzine avowedly formed his style upon English and French models. Both writers are curious evidence of the terrible repression of thought that existed under so mild a sovereign as Alexander I. Kreloff's fables are the perfection of easy innuendo; but the wit is so harmless, and the writer's purpose so evidently untainted by reforming tendencies, that his epigrams played like summer lightning over the surface of society: the satirist lived without fear of visits from the police, and died in an official post with which government had pensioned his discreet merits. Karamzine, a Russian to the core, had however travelled in foreign countries, and was indisposed by the very habit of criticism to allow his sense of truth to be absorbed in reverence for the power that clothed and fed him. Hence his history, like most that have since been published in Russia, confines itself to the first sixteen centuries of our era, as the police allow inquiry and criticism no further than the death of Peter the Great. And this spectre of a vigilant censorship, though M. de Gerebtzoff scarcely alludes to it, has in fact influenced the whole destiny of modern literature in Russia. Novels, poetry, expositions of the orthodox faith, works of science and antiquarian history were the only channels of thought down to 1855. The writings of Puschkin, the greatest Russian poet, have never yet appeared, except in a mutilated form; the 'Ode for Liberty,' for which he was banished, has been suppressed; and the new edition of his works which is now in preparation at St. Petersburg, will differ so essentially from its predecessors as to make them mere waste paper. Lermontoff and Marlinski are other notorious instances of the same fact. The only seeming exception that can be quoted, is the great license that has commonly been allowed to attacks on official corruption. Here, however, the satirists were felt to be, as in fact they were, an unpaid police of the government; and as their strictures were purely general, no single branch of the service could decorously take the initiative and complain.

The real question, which M. de Gerebtzoff has not touched, is scarcely what literary names Russia can boast; but what great works or new ideas have arisen within the empire. Society is so far cosmopolitan, that even the most difficult language is no barrier to the diffusion and appreciation of works of sterling merit. Tegner's Frithiof-Saga has been published complete in at least six English translations. Now a great empire like Russia has an incalculably greater power of forcing its produc-

tions upon the world than a small country like Sweden. Neither can it be said that translators have been wanting: Kreloff, Karamzine, Puschkin, Lermontoff, Tourguenieff, Gogol, and a host of minor names have all been rendered more or less completely into French, German, or English. In spite of this, and even of the partial success which a few of these books have achieved, Russian literature is almost altogether unknown. Something more than second-rate excellence is required, before men will familiarize themselves with the tones and thoughts of a strange country. Puschkin was a true poet, but he wanted creative power. He is fanciful, pathetic, and passionate; but so are a host of others in France and England. If we must choose between rivals in the same department, it is natural to prefer the great original of the whole school—Lord Byron, and those among his imitators whom we can read in their own words. Neither can it be said that Russian writers are more successful, when they try to find their subjects on native ground. Take, for instance, the famous play of Greboyadof, ‘The Miseries of Intellect.’ It is an attack on the rage for French manners and foreign culture among the upper classes. Such a subject may be very interesting to a native, and especially to a Slavenophile; but it is clearly ephemeral and local, like the fashion it satirizes. Gogol and Aksakoff, M. de Gerebtzoff’s favourite authors, rise no doubt very high above this level; but they are still merely the Dutch painters of a life that is not in itself romantic or elevated. What is ‘the Chronicle of a Family,’¹ who left Simbirsk to settle in the rich districts of the Bashkirs, to any out of Russia, except a few curious students of its social condition? What will such a book be even to Russians themselves a hundred years hence? It is not by his natural characteristics, or by his dramas from English history, that the name of Shakespeare is known: he is known even throughout Russia, because he studied man in his essentials and generalities. So long as Russian literature restricts its highest notions of art to photographic pictures of fleeting phases of life, the European will always be more successful than the national school. But neither one nor the other can hope for an immortality of more than a generation.

A short analysis of scientific discoveries in Russia, completes the view of the nation’s intellectual development. Except in mathematics, where we cannot follow M. de Gerebtzoff’s analysis, the results appear to be scanty and superficial. One chemist has published a hand-book for the use of schools;

¹ This is the title of one of Aksakoff’s most successful works.

another has written on the alkalies; and a third has studied arsenic and the combinations of copper. Higher ground is claimed for the native physicians. The successors of John Hunter and Bichat, not to say of Vesalius, will learn with surprise that a M. Pirogoff was 'incontestably' 'the first who discovered the possibility of applying anatomical topography to surgery.' The greatest name in the profession appears however to be that of Doctor Yacoubovitch, who has *discovered* that the nervous tissues generally are cellular; that the spinal marrow differs in its different parts; that the nerves are formed by filaments which issue from cellules; and that according to the localities of the lesion in different parts of the spine, is the nature of the disease. Meningitis, tetanus, and hemiplegia, had of course never been observed before 1857, when Dr. Yacoubovitch published his discoveries to the world. It is right to add that the Doctor's theory is really much more elaborate and original than might appear from the partial analysis we have borrowed from M. de Gerebtzoff. We have only wished to indicate the reckless manner in which old discoveries and new theories have been fused together by the author's patriotic zeal.

The chapters on commerce are among the most interesting and valuable in the book. Mining industry appears to be at a low ebb: the gold mines have been ruined by the competition of California and Australia, and by a graduated tax upon profits, which has had the effect of discouraging private enterprise. The iron trade is in the hands of private proprietors, but the rich are too careless to develop it, and the poor cannot command sufficient capital. These reasons appear very insufficient: probably the price of coal and the cheapness of English ware are the real causes. On the other hand, cotton manufactures flourish abundantly: compared with England, Russian industry is as 1 to 12; and compared with France as 1 to 2½. These are the only European powers that outstrip her. Woollen stuffs are produced yearly to the value of nearly 10,000,000*l.* in the empire, and 400,000 workmen are employed in this branch of industry. Silks are estimated at 2,000,000*l.* Three-sevenths of the sugar consumed in Russia is native manufacture from the beetroot. As, however, only 5 per cent. can be extracted against 7½ per cent., the proportion usual in Germany, and 20 per cent. which the juice of the sugar-cane yields, it is clear that the whole manufacture can only be carried on by aid of a prohibitory tariff, and at an immense loss to the resources of the empire. Although native iron is scarce, iron-works are fostered by the government, and articles to the value of 8,000,000*l.* are produced yearly. By the side of this factitious industry it is

gratifying to see that hides still figure to the value of 15,000,000*l.* a year. Two millions a year for spirits seems a somewhat low valuation, considering the habitual drunkenness of the population. Altogether, M. de Gerebtzoff computes that the annual productivity of the country, taking trade and agriculture together, allows a value of about 6*l.* 12*s.* a head; and that as 2*l.* a year is a large estimate for average wants, there is more than 4*l.* surplus to every individual. It would be easy to contest statistics which give an average of 5*l.* 4*s.* a head as the mean produce of agriculture in a country where the money value of the cereals is small. But it is simpler to glance at an English analogy. The value of our productions annually is estimated at 540,000,000*l.*, and the population of the two islands may be taken roughly at about 30,000,000. This gives us just 18*l.* a head. The common rate of expenses in prisons and workhouses is about two shillings a week a head, and is rather less than more. Subtracting, therefore, 5*l.* 4*s.* for expenditure, we find the excess to be 12*l.* 16*s.*, or nearly three times the amount of the Russian average. Yet the real difference in comfort between the English labourer and the Russian serf must be measured not by these imaginary surplusages, but by the difference between the two averages of life. Whatever is beyond the minimum goes in general to the upper and middle classes in both countries. All that can be safely said is, that a country in which 2*l.* a year will support an adult comfortably must be one in which the standard of requirements is low, the means of transport imperfect, and the taxation rudimentary.

The contrast of a great internal trade with scanty exports and imports leads M. de Gerebtzoff to a highly-characteristic inference. 'Russia,' he says, 'must be judged from another point of view than the other countries of Europe: she is not a member of a social body which, in order to move and live, must be in intimate relations, in conformity of existence with the other members of the same body; she is an individual being, which exists by itself, which must develop according to its own nature; she is a great microcosm which contains in itself all the conditions of a distinct personality.' The assistance of foreign capitalists for the construction of railways has been demanded, not because there is any want of money in the empire, but because government enterprises are at a discount. 'The absence of intimate relations with Europe would never have condemned us to the immobility of the Chinese; but we should have developed by ourselves in a more rational, more religious, and more moral manner: a single ship-load of good books would be sufficient to keep us acquainted with all that is done in the civilized world.'

Foreign commerce only supplies the empire with articles of luxury. This conception of an Asiatic Atlantis is followed by the singular hypothesis that the Russians are to contribute the moral element that is now wanting to the intellectual progress of Western Europe. It is indicated that this morality is to be found most purely and perfectly within the fold of the Orthodox Church. And in spite of his intense appreciation of '*le désir du bien public*,' and his righteous reprobation of English insularity, M. de Gerebtzoff concludes with the boast that 'every Russian has the right to say to himself, without undue presumption, that he belongs to that nation of the world which has before it the most powerful and prosperous future, and that the part of the world of which he is citizen is neither Europe nor Asia—but the great Russia.'

Probably no well-intentioned man could have done his country a worse service than by publishing such a book at such a time. All Europe was lately leagued together against 'the Holy Empire:' the one sentiment which united the discordant powers of the West was dread of the preponderance of a barbarous and bigoted people; and M. de Gerebtzoff apologises for his country by explaining that to be barbarous and bigoted is to be civilized. Perhaps, however, it is as well that the principles of the late Czar's government should be put forward in naked absurdity before the world. The essence of these Slavenophilic theories, whose promoters M. de Gerebtzoff blasphemously compares to Christ and His apostles, is at the bottom of the modern clamour for nationality. National development? why, there is no instance of a single people that has ever risen into real greatness by itself. The purest nations by blood are the lowest in the scale of humanity. Look at the mother-countries of those Arab and Norman conquerors, who have been the aristocracy of the world, and compare the race in its cradle with the race in its colonies. France and England are compounded of at least five nationalities; and if the Finnish, German, and Tartar elements were withdrawn from Russia, one half the population and more than half the national life would be taken away. Even this is the most petty aspect of the question. Every great people has its trial years of sorrow, during which it is schooled in the hard discipline of protracted wars, or submission to conquerors. Greece without Marathon and Salamis, England without Danes and Normans, Russia without its bloody memories of the Tartar, Polish, and Swedish invasions, would be nothing more than the pasture-lands of fat beeves and spiritless citizens. The nobler struggle of ideas comes later in the development of history. Great thoughts are not sown broad-cast in the world: it is much if one generation

or one century can add anything to the treasure it has inherited. What, in fact, does Russia owe to itself? Its church is Greek; its early architecture is Oriental; its art is Byzantine. Printing, gunpowder, steam, even the common processes of distillery and manufactures have all been received from the despised nations of the West. Would the nation have thought and worked out all these for itself? and if, as is not unlikely, it could have made the minor mechanical discoveries, how much time must have been wasted even over these? Why, Russia in the very last war, was reduced to extract sulphur by very complicated processes from pyrites: is it likely that her men of science, if they had never seen or experimented with the virgin sulphur, would have guessed the secret that a compound of iron must be disengaged for admixture with nitre and charcoal? The ship-load of good books is amusing as a concession, but quite useless as an argument. Few books are intelligible to a man in a different stage of civilization from the writers. William I. could hardly have understood Shakspeare, and Queen Elizabeth, in spite of a learned education, would have been sorely puzzled to construe *Sartor Resartus*. It is even difficult for those who do not live in the atmosphere of the writers to understand their works properly. And as the Russian Church is notoriously opposed to all teaching that contradicts its own interpretation of the Pentateuch, it is probable that the Russian public, once abandoned to native institutions, would not know much of modern philosophy.

The abolition of serfdom in Russia is a great instance of what the empire owes to the West. The abuse began in the old days of isolation: it has never been effectually assailed till within the last sixty years, and by two emperors who have been noted for liberal tendencies. Although a law of Alexander II. authorised emancipation by will, only 300,000 souls have owed their freedom to the liberality of their proprietors. Family interests and the pride of ownership have been stronger than the dictates of conscience. The story of Count Sheremetieff's serf, who was freed for bringing a barrel of oysters at a time when they were wanted, after his largest offers to buy himself, that his son might marry into a free family, had been refused, is an instance of the kind of caprice by which the most liberal masters were constantly actuated. Generous and high-minded men, knowing that their serfs had no other grievance but the want of liberty, were unable to understand that to be a serf was to be something less than a man. At last the nation has come to comprehend, what the State perceived many years ago, that a thoroughly barbarous institution gives Russia the position of a barbarous and

inferior state in her dealings with the West. Looking now at the manner in which the reform is carried out, we may perhaps question whether all that is national in it be not temporary and imperfect. The whole population of the country is now to receive a commercial organization, like that which has existed for the crown serfs since 1839. So far as the people acquire the power to assess their own taxes, and are saddled with the duty of providing for the support of the sick and impotent in their districts, no one can fairly object to this change: similar or analogous powers exist in our own borough towns, and throughout the Continent. But it is a feature of the old communes that all the village-lands should be held in common, and divided afresh, by general agreement or by lot, at the expiration of a certain term of years. This, as we have already pointed out, is an obstacle to all agricultural progress, and must end, if it be maintained, ultimately in a system of socialism, without either science or capital. Neither is this the only evil that is involved. The constitution of a proletariat, possessing a common and indefinitely divisible property, without any incentives to its improvement, or to the private accumulation of wealth, can only tend to efface all differences between class and class. If other causes do not intervene, society will gradually sink to a stagnant and uniform level of industrial pauperism in the villages. And this feature of the present reform is the more terrible, because it comes at a time when it is certain that the whole of the upper classes will be reduced from wealth to a mere competence, or from moderate incomes to poverty. That slave-owners should be turned into land-owners was the triumph of European ideas; but that wealth should be debarred of its natural rights in the labour-market by a system which provides the peasant with a maintenance independent of the wages of labour, was an original conception, which the world has undoubtedly learned from Russian emancipationists.

We speak in all sadness, for we believe the dangerous system has been forced upon the crown as a compromise and a makeshift. Russian law had never recognised slavery: it had only acknowledged the ownership of certain houses and lands, to which certain families or souls were indissolubly attached. The provision was meant mercifully, to prevent the sundering of family ties; but it has so far riveted the connection between the peasants and their tenements, that to tear them asunder now would be impossible: in sentiment and in fact, the monjik and his belongings are one, whether bond or free, whether owned by a lord or incorporated in a commune. So, too, the socialistic element is the natural substitute for a poor-law among

a people who can now no longer look for protection and support to their proprietors. The misfortune is, that it extends even beyond the precincts of the village. A rich peasant may indeed acquire private property in the numerous unenclosed and un-guilded districts of his government; but his wealth will be known by his neighbours, and his taxes will be in proportion to his industry and success; moreover, they will be assessed, not from above by the educated and wealthy, but by a democratic assembly, which can only desire to shift its burdens upon the rich. Facts like these, and the wretched project of paying the nobles for their land and serfs with assignats, incline us to regard the future of the present movement with mixed feelings of alarm and admiration. 'Fais ce que dois adviennne que pourra' is a noble device for states and for individuals; but a little wisdom in execution would not have impaired the greatness of an act of justice. It is old Russia and old Europe—theories of the primæval Meer, and reminiscences of the finance of the National Assembly and Law—that have misled the leaders of the movement in the instances we have quoted. A ship-load of good books, if they contained a few volumes of history and a few treatises on political economy, would go far to correct the errors which the policy of Count Kisseleff and the advice of one or two Warsaw bankers have initiated.

The true greatness of Russia lies in that very plastic nature which the old Muscovite party deprecate. Superstition and bureaucratic centralization are mere phases of life in an infant society. The epoch when men propose to pay a just governor to resign, because he examines papers and retards the despatch of business, is passing away, as the cumbrous forms themselves are swept into nothingness.¹ The doctrine that the crown can sustain no loss; the whole apparatus of checks and counter-checks; the great beggarly army of thieves in uniform will soon be traditions of the men who remember Nicholas. For the degradation of the officials was never finally consummated, till the darling sovereign of Russian conservatism concentrated the state in his own cabinet, and armed the heads of departments with irresponsible power over all their subordinates. Through a hail-storm of libels and epigrams, the present emperor is undoing his father's work, and accomplishing the still greater reform which Nicholas did not even dare to begin. The word 'slave' which Catherine banished by an ukase from the dictionary, will

¹ This *reductio ad absurdum* of the existing bureaucratic system has actually occurred. See the '*Troisième Etude sur l'Avenir de la Russie*,' by D. K. Schédo-Ferroti (a pseudonym).

soon have no meaning in the household life of Russia. Men punished by the torture of their relations for a deficient rent, women sold to unutterable shame, peasants roasting their savage lords alive, are among the legacies of old Russia, and their abolition is the glory of the party of movement. From the freedom of the people to free thought and a free press, the transition will be easy and rapid. The very railways that are now in course of construction, will forward the circulation of European ideas. Even as it is, more than a thousand copies of M. Herzen's 'Northern Star,' the most obnoxious work of the cleverest Russian refugee, are every year smuggled over the frontiers. Thirty years hence, when population and trade have increased, as they will increase with liberty, not even the flaming sword of the Orthodox Church will be able to keep out those who have eaten of the tree of knowledge from the Eden of the Holy Empire.

In reviewing a book, which is the worst of libels upon the country it professes to defend, we have been compelled to call attention chiefly to the great deficiencies of Russian civilization. Such criticisms are not inconsistent with an honest admiration of the people, and hearty good wishes for their future prosperity. The heroic devotion of the men who perished in the name of God and the Czar at Sebastopol has obliterated the remembrance of that unjust quarrel in England. The spectacle of a monarch freeing his people, of the little chivalrous vanguard among the nobles who are following him to their own immediate ruin, and of twenty millions of bondsmen, awaiting the promised and delayed gift with sublime confidence in their sovereign, is among the few grand memories of these later days. We, especially, who almost seem to have survived all liberties except our own in the West, can afford to rejoice that the great example of slave emancipation has not been the mere quixotism of a single island. Our contest with Russia was not for territorial aggrandisement; rather it was the solution of tangled problems, and of a long battle of ideas. We first knew the greatness of our own success, when we heard that the policy of thirty years had been renounced, and that a society of conscripts and slaves was to receive freedom in lieu of foreign dominion. Never did a grander reality replace the Fata Morgana of idle day-dreams. A nation which thought to conquer the world, was best re-proved by the stern logic of the sword: before a people that seeks to reform itself we can only bow reverently, as fellow-men, who are ourselves looking for the light.

IX.

HISTORICAL STUDY AT OXFORD.

1. *Examination Papers in Law and Modern History.* Oxford, 1858.
2. *Correspondence between the Protestant Alliance and the Examiners in Law and Modern History.* Oxford, 1858.

ALL Oxford men who have retained any interest in the scene of their own early studies, even though they may have ceased to bestow any minute attention on the details of University controversies and legislation, can hardly have failed to hear something of the wider range which Oxford studies have of late years assumed. Indeed, we may well presume that some knowledge of them has penetrated beyond the widest limits of the Academical public. The appearance of the Oxford class-list is an event which has always been looked for with anxiety in many English homes. It is not for his own sake alone that the ambitious youth covets the glories of the first class or the more modest distinction of the honorary fourth. It is not only his own disgrace which is lamented by the victim who finds his labours unrewarded even by a simple *testamur*. Fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters, some, perchance, also whose interest is of a yet more tender kind, have long wept and rejoiced over the honours and the rebukes bestowed by the impartial hand of Alma Mater. Now they cannot have failed to observe that the chances of glory and the perils of discomfiture have both of late years been amazingly multiplied. Of old, a double first was the highest flight that ambition could even dream of. Nowadays, six first classes may conceivably be heaped upon one illustrious brow, and to obtain three or four is quite within the limits of ordinary probability. But, on the other hand, if honours have become more common, failures have become more common also. He must be a plodding, mediocre kind of fellow, who can go through four examinations without once deviating from the golden mean either to the right or to the left. There is something unromantic in the idea of four simple *testamurs*, undiversified by a single class or a single pluck. The fond parent whose hopes used to rise no higher than a pass at Little-Go and another at Great-Go, may now fairly count on the academical career of his hopeful heir exhibiting a little more of the ups and downs of life. We fear that the ancient tale of 'Ma', Pa's

plucked again,' is now more likely to be verified than ever. But on the other hand, we believe that more than one happy matron has of late had her heart gladdened by the far different announcement, 'Ma', Pa's got another first.'

The old gentlemen who ever and anon drop into the Oxford schools at all seasons, must find the atmosphere of the place widely different from what they remember in the days of their own youth. Still more must the young ladies with whom, on bright summer days, those learned shades are almost perilously filled, find the scene widely different from the traditions which they have received from their mammas. To them the change must indeed be a highly agreeable one. They have no longer to sit and hear questions about the construction of *ἄν* or the præterperfect of *τύπτω* diversified only by the chance of some grotesque answer about David or Samuel, at which it would be a breach of respect to Holy Writ to raise a laugh. The damsel whose accomplished governess has driven her through 'all the ordinary branches of an English education,' may now sit and hear questions of which she is fully competent to judge, and may sometimes regret the hard fate which prevents her from herself taking her chance alongside of her brothers or lovers. Before such auditors, even the dryness of legal technicalities is, by gallant examiners, relieved by a diversion to the subject of 'Dower de la plus belle,' while even that delicate question may be surpassed in interest by an inquiry into the truth of the legend of Fair Rosamond, or by the question whether King Harry was actuated by purely patriotic motives in marrying Jane Seymour the day after he cut off the head of Anne Boleyn. They may possibly be less shocked than the examiners at hearing that the qualification of a county elector is an estate of 300*l.* per annum, or that when bills have passed both Houses of Parliament, the Queen may alter them. But no well-educated young lady will retire from the spectacle without a due feeling of her own superiority to young gentlemen who place Canterbury in Cambridgeshire and Monmouth on the river Tees, or without feeling that her own place in the class-list would be higher than those who hold that Constantinople lies on the Baltic, or that the Danube rises in Thessaly and flows westward.

Or the scene may be changed. If law and history attract their tens and hundreds, there are other sciences, other schools, which can at least number their votaries by units. Instead of the motley crowd who pose over the arbitrary relations of prince and subject, lord and vassal, our fair visitor may prefer the select band whose researches are devoted to the secrets of Nature herself. There may honours be won by correct expositions of the nature

of oxygen, and testamurs be perilled by inadequate views of the construction of the ichthyosaurus. Nay, it is even rumoured that on at least one occasion the sacred precincts exhibited a scene which cannot but have raised mournful feelings in every gentle bosom. What would the disputants of a past generation, the Coplestons and the Jeffreys, have said to the sight of a school's table strewn with birds' eggs? What skilful nests must have been rifled, how many feathered parents must have mourned over their blighted hopes, before the ambitious candidate could show by demonstration on the actual specimen the different markings of the pee-wit and the sandpiper, of the tom-tit and the water-wagtail. Whatever may have been the gentler emotions of our supposed young lady, our old hypothetical gentleman could hardly have gone away with any other thought than that the Oxford of his grandson had become a very different place from the Oxford where he himself was required to solve no more exciting problems than the text of Horace and Sophocles, or the profounder mysteries of *Barbara celarent*.

The existing system of examination was established in 1849-50, and came into actual working in 1853. Up to that time, only two examinations were compulsory upon the Oxford undergraduate. The first was the exercise called Responsions, or more familiarly Little-Go, consisting of an examination in rudimentary Greek and Latin scholarship, and in equally rudimentary logic or mathematics. The second was that called distinctively the Public Examination, passing which entitled the candidate to his degree. At this last, honours were given in two schools, those of Literæ Humaniores and Mathematics. The former consisted of Greek and Latin scholarship, of logic, and of philosophy and history studied in original Greek and Latin writers, modern authors, unless the place held by the writings of Butler be looked on as an exception, being admitted only by way of supplement and illustration. The amount of history commonly taken up for a class comprised Herodotus, Thucydides, the first decade of Livy, and Tacitus. Xenophon, Polybius, and other authors were occasionally taken up, but more rarely.

This system, of course, appeared to those who systematically depreciate classical education, to be narrow, antiquated, unworthy of the nineteenth century. It was argued that other subjects, at least as important as Greek and Latin philology, philosophy, and history, were now at large in the world, and that the University ought to adopt them, alongside of the older subjects, as part of its recognised course. Besides these, some more special and technical objections were not wanting. It was argued that, for the ordinary undergraduate, two examinations

in his university course were not enough to keep him steadily at work during its whole time. It was argued that for the classmen the subjects of the final examination were too multifarious, that excellence in verbal scholarship, in history, and in philosophy, were not necessarily combined, and that it would be in every way an advantage and a relief to the candidates to make some division of the several subjects. Of these two sets of objections, the result of the second was to multiply examinations, the result of the first was to multiply the schools at the final examination.

In point of fact every candidate for a degree must now pass four examinations, which he may, if he pleases, increase to seven. But the arrangement and nomenclature introduced by the new system is singularly confused and perplexing. In the old time the two trials to be undergone were the Responsions before the 'Masters of the Schools,' and the Public Examination before the Public Examiners. The Responsions and the officers who conducted them were, we believe, both of ancient date; they were simply made to take their place in an improved form in that system of examinations which is about coeval with the present century. The changes of 1849-50 increased the amount of work to be gone through at Responsions, but left untouched the style and title both of the exercise and of its administrators. The 'Public Examination' was divided into two—'Examinatio Publica Prima' and 'Examinatio Publica Secunda.' The former consists of two schools, Greek and Latin literature and Mathematics, and the officers who preside at it are, for some unknown reason, called *Moderators*. The result has been that, as nobody could talk about 'First Public Examination,' this examination is everywhere, except in statutes and class lists, spoken of by the grotesque and unmeaning name of 'Moderations'—in undergraduate language more familiarly 'Mods,'—and we have even heard its administrators spoken of, by a strange circumgyration, as 'Examiners in Moderations.' Again, the 'Second Public Examination' was divided into four schools, Literæ Humaniores, Mathematics, Natural Science, and Law and Modern History. Each candidate was required to pass in the school of Literæ Humaniores and in one at least of the other three at his own discretion. A man may, of course, if he pleases, adventure himself in all four, and, under certain circumstances, it is not unusual for a man to present himself in three. But the two schools which the candidate must pass need not follow immediately on one another, as the Mathematical and Classical schools did in old times. An interval of several terms may intervene between the two: they are practically two quite distinct examinations. In short, there are now four

necessary examinations for each undergraduate, of which the *first* is called Responsions, the *second* is called 'Examinatio *Prima*,' while the *third* and *fourth* are jumbled together under the head of 'Examinatio *Secunda*.' This strange method of numeration seems to show that, though arithmetic has been introduced as one of the subjects for Responsions, yet that useful science has not yet found its way into the recesses of the Delegates' room. We remember very well reading through one of those abortive forms of statute which almost terminally issue from that fount of legislative wisdom. Forgetting the new meanings that words had assumed, we construed, in our simplicity, 'Prima' by 'first,' and 'Secunda' by 'second'—that is to say, we thought for some while that, 'Examinatio Publica Prima' meant 'Smalls,' and that 'Examinatio Publica Secunda' meant 'Mods.' The result was of course inextricable confusion. At last a light flashed across our mind; we suddenly remembered that, in Hebdomadal language, 'Prima' meant 'Second,' and 'Secunda' 'Third and Fourth.' The riddle was at once solved; and if we did not find much sense or wisdom in the proposal itself, we had at least the satisfaction of knowing what it was that its authors meant to propose.

After this general view of the whole system now existing, without which our remarks could hardly have been intelligible, we will now turn to our more immediate subject, the working of the new Historical School. Under the old system, it will be observed, the only portions of history taken up were certain portions of the history of ancient Greece and Rome. Whether this was a good or a bad system admitted of being argued from several points of view. If a university was bound to teach everything, and still more, to make everything obligatory for a degree, there could be no doubt that this arrangement left out many things just as important as any which it included. No one could deny that the history of England was at least equally important with the history of Greece, that, if it was desirable to be acquainted with the Reform Bills of Kleisthenes and of Caius Licinius, it was at least as desirable to be acquainted with the Reform Bills of Simon, Earl of Leicester, and of Charles, Earl Grey. To this it was answered, that a university was not bound to require universal knowledge as a *sine quâ non* for a degree, or even for a first class; that it was enough if her undergraduate course gave a man a start for maturer studies, if it laid a good foundation ready for a future superstructure. The university, it was said, could not undertake, in the few years at her command, to make men finished philosophers or finished historians; it was enough to put them in the way of becoming either in after-life.

The study of Aristotle was the best of all ground-works for the future philosopher, the study of Thucydides was the best of all ground-works for the future historian. And, moreover, the future historian would be all the better for his study of the rudiments of philosophy, and the future philosopher all the better for his study of the rudiments of history. The history of Greece supplied a typical history, in which all the laws of historical and political science could be studied within a short compass. To attempt universal history as an academical study could only lead to superficial knowledge. The subject was too vast, the materials too varied, to allow of its being got up with the same minute and careful precision as the typical period hitherto selected. It might have been added that the proposed scheme would not compass even what we may suppose to have been its own end. It was certainly a scandal that a man might leave the university, might even attain its highest honours, without having ever heard the names of Charlemagne or Napoleon. But this was in no way obviated by proposing 'Modern' history as one alternative subject among others. A man may get a testamur, or even a double first, without having heard of Charlemagne or Napoleon just as much now as he could before. He may know everything as far as the sacrifice of Tissaphernes, and then, instead of the natural complement of his knowledge, may add on a greater or less acquaintance with triangles or with birds' eggs.

We are sorry to say it, but we cannot help acknowledging the truth, that the reforms of 1849-50 were evidently made under a supposed necessity of doing something, without the University exactly knowing what it wanted to do. There was a popular cry for extending the studies of the place, and bringing it more into-harmony with, 'the march of intellect' around it. There were practical complaints from working tutors that the passmen had not enough to do to occupy their time, and that the classmen needed relief by dividing the subjects hitherto taken up at the final examination. There was a feeling abroad that there were many men in Oxford of considerable natural power, who had no chance of distinguishing themselves in the classical schools, but who might have a fair chance of distinguishing themselves in something else. All this led to a new scheme being proposed. And every one who knows anything of Oxford legislation, the unwillingness to reject what one may not amend, the weariness brought on by the incessant repetition of the same proposal, all give any measure that is brought forward a far greater chance of being ultimately carried than it would have in an assembly where free power of proposal and amendment was allowed to every member.

Probably the greatest admirers of the new scheme would not claim for that portion of it which relates to 'Modern' history any higher merit than that of being a praiseworthy effort in a praiseworthy direction. No one can deny that it is crude and imperfect, and that it manifests very little acquaintance on the part of its framers with the laws of historical science or with modern historical research. Its authors seem to have had no idea whatever of the greatness of the subject with which they were dealing. They were not historians themselves: we have no reason to believe that they called in historians to advise them. With regard to the new studies which they were introducing, they were evidently groping in darkness; and in truth they seem to have had hardly clearer views as to the real merits and advantages of the studies which already existed.

The vulgar objection to 'classical' studies and 'classical' education is, that such pursuits are antiquated, unpractical, in no way bearing upon modern life and modern knowledge. Such charges ought to be indignantly repudiated by every man who has gone through and profited by the former Oxford course. The masterpieces of poetry, history, and philosophy, form the best ground-work of all knowledge; but they are studied in vain, if dwelt upon as if they were themselves the superstructure. It is doing no honour to old Greece to look upon it as something utterly cut off from modern England. He who worthily studies the past by the present, and the present by the past, knows that the sciences of morals and politics are of universal application. Human nature is the same always and everywhere: he who best understands the history of England will best understand the history of Athens, and he who best understands the history of Athens will best understand the history of England. But the scheme of 1849-50 actually pleaded guilty to the vulgar calumny—'ancient' and 'modern' learning were wholly divorced. Its first form is now probably forgotten; but it is well worth remembering, as showing the way in which the framers of the statute set to work. The fourth school was not, as it is now, one of 'Law and Modern History,' but one of 'Modern History and the Cognate Sciences.' It was, in fact, a refuge for the destitute, an amalgamation of all subjects which did not exactly come under any of the other heads. It was to contain an odd mixture of historical, philosophical, and philological subjects, with no connection among themselves, except that they were not to be studied in the ancient Greek and Latin writers. Now this was a very different thing from the union of scholarship, history, and philosophy, in the old classical school. In that school certain Greek authors were to be mastered, in

their text and in their matter : among them was the greatest of philosophers and the greatest of historians ; but a certain unity was given to the study by the fact that the ground-work of everything was the accurate knowledge of the text of Greek and Latin authors. But there was no such link to bind together 'modern' history, modern philological research, and moral science studied in modern writers. The connection was purely negative ; all were subjects external to the old system, and that was all. To leave all the old subjects in one school, and to throw all the new ones into another, was a much easier process than a redistribution, which would have brought the different branches of ancient and modern learning into their proper relations to one another.

This proposal was too much for the common sense of the University. It was rejected by Convocation, and another substituted, which gave the school its present form and designation, as a 'School of Law and Modern History.' There is a speciousness about the union of these two subjects which probably satisfies every one who has not had practical experience of the working of the system. In a certain sense law and history ought undoubtedly to be combined. No man can be a good lawyer without knowing a good deal of history ; no man can be a good historian without knowing a good deal of law. Nothing is more important for the historical student than that he should master the history of internal legislation in the countries with which he deals, as well as the merely external history of battles and treaties. The student of general European history should be familiar with the great principles of Roman, Teutonic, ecclesiastical, and modern English jurisprudence. The student of English history should know what important statutes were passed in each reign, which of them have been repealed or modified, and which remain in force to this day. But all this is widely different from the union of law and history in the fourth school at Oxford. The knowledge of law which is required by an ordinary, or even by a more profound, student of history is very different from the technical knowledge required by the professional lawyer. Now, strange to say, this last, in its very pettiest and most repulsive form, is what partly statute and partly custom requires in the Oxford degree Examination. The minimum of law and history required for a degree is either English history from William the Conqueror to Henry VII., with Blackstone on Real Property or Justinian's Institutes, or else English history from Henry VII. to William III., with Blackstone on Personal Property or Justinian's Institutes. The classmen add to their legal portion a knowledge of international

law, which is commonly sought in the Elements of Wheaton. Now, what is the upshot of this? Simply that the great mass of the candidates learn, by way of law, just that portion of legal knowledge which is absolutely useless, and omit that which would be really profitable. The immense majority of the candidates take up what is called the 'First Period' of English history, namely, from William the Conqueror to Henry VII. That England had any existence before the temporary overthrow of English nationality, is an idea which has not yet penetrated either the Hebdomadal or the undergraduate mind. But let that pass for the present. The result is that, as perhaps nine-tenths of the men take up the 'First Period,' nine-tenths take up Blackstone on Real Property. That is to say, they pass an examination in law, remaining in utter ignorance of nearly all the law which is worth knowing. Constitutional law is absolutely necessary for every citizen of a free state; criminal law is highly desirable for that large portion of citizens who are likely to have some share in the administration of justice. But of these matters the young gentlemen who obtain an Oxford Law testamur know absolutely nothing. It is not their business to find out the constitution of either House of Parliament, or to know the difference between murder and manslaughter. But they have diligently got up the whole ceremony of fines and recoveries; they know quite well how to execute a deed without calling in the aid of the family solicitor. A student may be able to define tenant-in-tail after possibility of issue extinct who supposes that the House of Lords consists of Earls and Earls' sons, and that the latter favoured class enjoy the title of Marquis. He knows all about escrows and essoigns, but he thinks that all bills must be introduced in the House of Commons. One promising youth strenuously denies that any Bishops have seats in the House of Lords, another believes that they are appointed by the Prime Minister, by the delivery of a staff. He passes in law, and perhaps thinks himself a finished lawyer, but the names of the Courts of Common Law and the number of their judges, are matters 'not in his books.' A vast majority of candidates believe that Mr. Locke King's motion is already carried, and that all 10*l.* householders have county votes; while a select and oligarchic minority maintain that no man can have a share in the choice of knights of the shire who cannot boast of a freehold of an annual value, according to some opinions, of 50*l.*, according to others, of 300*l.*

Occasionally, however, a little variety is introduced by candidates availing themselves of the permission to substitute the Imperial Institutes for Blackstone's Commentaries. It is only

just to say that those who do this are commonly among the best of the passmen. Roman law, taken in its natural connection with other things, is beyond all doubt, one of the most valuable studies, either for the lawyer or the historian. But it is hard to see what great advantage can come of it when taken up in this unconnected way. The candidate takes up Justinian's Institutes, and the 'first' or 'second period' of English history. No power on earth can bring harmony out of such disjointed elements. Of the long period between Tissaphernes and William the Conqueror the candidate knows absolutely nothing. How extraordinary a phenomenon these Institutes really are, he has no sort of conception. Here is the Slavonic ruler of Greece and the East, putting forth a system of jurisprudence, Latin in speech, Roman in every enactment. Here is the Christian and Orthodox emperor, putting forth a volume containing no sign of Christianity, except in the invocation with which it opens. The legislation of Justinian, in its origin and its permanence, is the most speaking of all witnesses to the eternity of Rome. But all this is lost upon the candidate who takes in Justinian's Institutes and 'the First Period.' Who Justinian was, when and where he reigned, whether he were a Christian or a heathen, are questions which he is never asked, and which no statute requires him to be capable of answering. He may gaze in wonder at the long string of titles which express the still abiding majesty of Cæsar Augustus; but he is not bound to know what is meant by Alamanicus, Gothicus, Francicus, Germanicus, Anticus, Alanicus, Vandalicus, and Africanus. To him Tribonian is but a name, Belisarius and Narses are something less than a name. What else should they be, when, under the most favourable circumstances, his last academical acquaintances were Vespasian and Titus, and when he is now required to yoke with his legal researches no fact of earlier date than that 'William the Conqueror long did reign?'

Professional, and not historical law being thus unhappily recognised as the matter of the examination, an almost more unhappy result necessarily follows, as to the appointment of the Examiners. The statute enjoins the appointment of three Examiners in Law and Modern History. Custom requires that the board should consist of two historians and a lawyer. Now the necessary presence of a lawyer, as a lawyer, is fatal to the whole thing. We would not be misunderstood on the point: there is no reason on earth why a lawyer should not be appointed Examiner as much as a clergyman or a private gentleman, if only he be appointed, as the clergyman or private gentleman is, on the ground of his general historical attainments. What we

protest against is, the necessary presence of a professional lawyer to examine in professional law: in short, the appointment of, what the statute nowhere recognises, a distinct Law Examiner. Such an one may be a man of enlarged mind and varied research, or he may be the most grovelling pettifogger that the Inns of Court can turn out, but in either case he converts what should be an academical, into a professional, business. With such an one, it is utterly impossible that the other Examiners can act in thorough harmony. The two branches of the examination are utterly divorced; the questions set in one have no sort of reference to the questions set in the other. In fact, there are two distinct examinations, one in law, another in history: a man's place in the Class List often expresses his real place in neither, but a compromise between the two. And the most fatal result is, that the intrusion of professional law operates most hardly upon the best men. The classmen suffer far more from it than the passmen. The reason is obvious. To the passmen, with a few honourable exceptions, the whole thing is a matter of cram, and we suppose that to cram law is no harder than to cram history. But to a classman, intent on and interested in his work, giving his whole mind to the fascinating stores of knowledge which are spread before him, it is felt as a cruel interruption to be compelled to turn away from the enchantment of Gibbon and Milman, of Eginhard and Joinville, to get up the repulsive and useless details of an antiquated jurisprudence. He is naturally disgusted with the subject; he gets it up carelessly and perfunctorily, because he learns it against the grain, and knows that he will forget it a fortnight after the examination. He wins the hearts of two Examiners by his familiarity with Charles the Great or with Charles the Fifth, and is worried like a burglar by the third if he breaks down in some trumpery detail about fines and recoveries. As things now stand, an examination in 'Law and Modern History,' is about as much an harmonious whole as would be an examination in Law and Hydrostatics, or in Phlebotomy and Modern History.

Now the non-academical reader will hardly believe that this strange and fatal confusion actually exists alongside of another system, a very slight expansion of which would at once redress it. Besides the examination in 'Law and Modern History,' the University possesses a distinct Law School, Law Degrees, Law Examinations, Law Examiners. Civil law is at once a part of the Law and Modern History Examination, and the material of a totally distinct examination by itself. Out of the Delegates' Room, it seems a very easy change to confine the history school to history and historical law, and to transfer professional law, English as

well as Roman, to the proper law school, and, if necessary, to recognise this last as a fifth school in the '*Examinatio Publica Secunda*.'

But supposing law and history to be thus brought into their proper relations to one another, there would still be much wanting to bring the historical studies of Oxford into a satisfactory state. It is rather remarkable that, ever since the changes of 1849-50, farther changes have been at least annually, almost terminally, looked upon as impending. More than one form of statute has actually been proposed and has come to nought. Many of these changes relate to matters of detail, with which we are not now concerned; not one has touched the real faults of the historical school. But there is now a feeling very widely at work in the University, that the new schools have universally failed as pass schools. The fact is, with regard to the history school at least, that it comes at the wrong end. A decent knowledge of the history and constitution of England is incumbent upon every Englishman; but it is a strange way of encouraging it, to make it an alternative subject among three at the end of the academical course. The interests of the University, as distinguished from those of particular colleges, imperatively require an uniform University Matriculation Examination, and of such examination the rudiments of English history should form an essential part. The University should be delivered from the monstrous scandal of asking young men of two or three and twenty—sometimes men who have actually entered on public life, clergymen, officers, civil servants of the government—the childish questions which they would probably have answered much better when they were twelve or thirteen. If a lad at the age that he enters the University does not know the succession of the Kings of England, and a few of the principal wars, statutes, and other important events of each reign, we can only marvel what his mother, nurse, governess, and schoolmaster can possibly have been about. If there are any schools, public or private, where such absolutely essential knowledge is not made a matter of primary importance, we can only say, let such schools reform themselves with all possible speed. As it is, from whatever cause, the pass standard is necessarily so low, that every man must get his testamur who does not absolutely deserve a flogging. Of course there are limits to human endurance, even in the School of Law and Modern History. The long sleeves and the hood of down are at least not bestowed on young gentlemen who cannot tell the successor of William the Conqueror, or who solemnly write down on paper that '*Queen Philippa was the wife of Edward the First, who murdered her and then married again.*'

Again, at whatever time the examination comes, the strange division into 'periods' should be done away with. It is ruinous to all sound historical study to allow even the most superficial student of English history to begin with the Norman Conquest: it is still more ruinous to allow him to begin with the accession of Henry the Eighth. Every English feeling revolts at the idea of throwing aside as worthless the true birth and growth of Teutonic England, at dating the beginning of her existence from her momentary subjection to the scourge of the stranger. This, like so many other points of reform, has been repeatedly pressed on Hebdomadal Boards and Hebdomadal Councils: their reply has invariably been conveyed in the form of that *argumentum a silentio* which is doubtless very easy, and possibly very dignified, but which does not carry much conviction to the minds of others. Every decent historian must know that a study of English history which begins either with William the Conqueror or Henry the Eighth is absolutely worthless. In answer to this, of course, comes the cuckoo-cry of 'No text-books,' strange enough in the days of Palgrave and Kemble and Lappenberg, in the University of such men as Mr. Earle of Oriel, and Mr. Stubbs of Trinity. If text-books do not exist, make them. What are Oxford's magnificent endowments given for, but for the support of competent scholars? What are her splendid libraries for, but to supply them with materials? What is her wealthy press for, except to disseminate their writings? Oxford, of all places in the world, should never have a literary want which she cannot herself supply.

To turn from passmen to classmen is doubtless delightful everywhere; it is especially so in the Modern History School. The amount of zeal, labour, and real information displayed by many of the candidates for honours is most creditable to them, and only makes one the more regret the vicious system of study chalked out for them, and the miserably insufficient time allowed for preparation for the school. The amount of knowledge which many of these young men acquire, in the space of, perhaps, six months, and under every possible disadvantage, is sometimes really amazing. That their knowledge is often confused, disjointed, and superficial is not their fault, but that of the system upon which they are set to work. Those who do so well as it is, would of course do far better under more happy auspices. But, as it is, any thorough knowledge of history is almost impossible even in the Class Schools. The primary error of all is the establishment of a School of 'Modern' History instead of a School of History. It is really wonderful what difficulty people have in taking in that prophetic dictum of Arnold, that the division into 'Ancient' and 'Modern' history

is purely arbitrary and unphilosophical. People cannot be brought to see that history is one subject, one great drama, that no part is fully intelligible without reference to other parts; that, though no one man can be master of every period alike, yet all periods require the exercise of precisely the same faculties for their study. 'Modern' history is strangely supposed to be something easier than 'Ancient,' and one ground of its introduction was avowedly to place the honours of the Class List within the reach of men who would have been incapable of attaining them under the old system. The truth of the matter is, that the founders of the new schools seem to have had no idea that there were any *original authorities* for mediæval, or for more recent history. Their idea of 'ancient' history was doubtless to read Thucydides and Tacitus; but their idea of 'modern' history was simply to read Hallam and Guizot, the latter, in all probability, through the kindly agency of Mr. Bohn. To have only read Grote or Thirlwall would confessedly never do; but that there were writers to whom Hallam and Guizot stand in the same relation which Grote and Thirlwall do to Thucydides, seems never to have entered their imagination. That 'modern' history is too vast a subject for an undergraduate to get it all up in original authorities is an undoubted truth: it was one of the arguments brought against the establishment of a modern-history school at all: it cannot in fairness be turned about to defend a bad school against a good one. Most undoubtedly no man, least of all no undergraduate, can master the original authorities for all mediæval history. But then very few men at all, and certainly no undergraduates, ever think of mastering all the original authorities for Grecian history. No system of examination should propose to do more for mediæval history than is now done for Grecian history, namely, to select a few of the best. It is curious to see how completely men forget that this has really been done with regard to the Greek historians. We read—and rightly read—only one or two selected original writers of transcendent merit. The result is that most people quite forget that there are any other Greek historians at all. No one wants to make everybody wade either through the wearisome follies of Diodorus or through all the rubbish put forth under the authority of the Master of the Rolls. We have made our selection for Greece: we have only to do the like for England, France, and the Holy Roman Empire. Without some acquaintance with original writers, no historical knowledge can be gained worthy of the name. But when knowledge is to be gained only through documents in mediæval Latin, in Byzantine Greek, in Anglo-Saxon, or in

Old French, it becomes a very serious matter indeed. It is not, indeed, a whit more serious than the old classical school, but it is quite another business from the proposed process of agreeably lounging over Gibbon, Hallam, and Guizot. The repugnance to original research on these matters would be ludicrous were it not deplorable. It is to the credit of the successive boards of Examiners that their influence has constantly set more and more in the direction of real knowledge. But the influence of higher dignitaries has no less constantly set the other way. Snubs, insults, official censures, have been the weapons of their warfare. Every one in Oxford remembers the censure put forth in 1857 against the then Examiners, which, in the true spirit of the Holy Office, assigned no reason for its condemnation, but which, every one knows, was intended as a discouragement of original research. Some whispered that Milman's *Latin Christianity* was supposed to be a Popish book; others that the dignitaries were puzzled as to the sex of Florence of Worcester. Happily, however, it is now an established point that every candidate for a class must take up at least one original authority, and that it will be much better for him to take it up in its original tongue. This, of course, is only a small instalment of what is to be wished; but it is a cheering sight, and one, doubtless, most appalling to the advocates of the 'easy' theory, to see the untranslated works of Eginhard fully recognized as an Oxford class-book, and also to see them occasionally exchanged for the certainly less attractive pages of Herbert of Bosham.

But no remedy will be anything more than a palliative till the divorce between 'ancient' and 'modern' history is removed. In any true view of history, the whole tale, from the first days of Greece onward, forms one great drama; there is no break; every early event influences later events; later events cannot be understood without a knowledge of earlier ones. Greece first develops the whole being of civilized man; Macedonia becomes the armed missionary of Hellenic life, the champion of the west against the east, of civilization against barbarism. From Macedonia the torch passes on to all-conquering, undying Rome—Rome, whose still abiding life forms the only key to the real history of a thousand years. The championship of the west against the east, of civilization against barbarism, now assumes a yet higher form as the championship of Christianity against heathendom and misbelief. Old Rome wins to her creed Goth and Lombard, Frank and Saxon, and places her diadem on the brow of a Teutonic Cæsar. New Rome preaches the cross to Bulgarian, Servian, and Russian, and beats back the successive waves of Persian, Saracen, and

Turkish inroad. From Marathon to Lepanto, rather say from Marathon to Mesolongi, the history of Europe and Western Asia is but the record of this one undying struggle. But all this is a blank to the student who leaps from the sacrifice of Tissaphernes to the coronation of Charlemagne. It is a strange fact that a man may obtain a double first in the Oxford schools to whom the names of Alexander, Hannibal, Cæsar, Constantine, and Belisarius are absolutely unknown. He may know in a dim way that Roman Cæsars still reigned in East and West for ages after the mystic year 476. He may know in a dim way that Italian republics still reflected the living image of the commonwealths of ancient Greece. But he has not been taught to recognise, in the titles of the Basils and the Fredericks, the true witness of Rome's eternity: he has not been taught to look through the long succession of Athens, Rhodes, Cherson, Naples, Milan, Florence, and Switzerland, and to see how, even in the darkest times, freedom has never been left without a witness upon earth. He may even come to the work with still less preparation than we have imagined. He may not even have gone through the sound discipline which the old classical school still affords, in its Aristotle and its Thucydides. He may come to 'modern' history, as his first serious study of any kind, in total ignorance of all history before the very uncertain point at which the 'modern' school takes it up. Imagine a man sitting down to Gibbon and Guizot to whom the previous history of Rome is an absolute blank. Yet this is a phenomenon of constant occurrence. The real wonder is that the knowledge acquired by the young men who offer themselves in the Modern History School is not ten times more superficial and inaccurate than it actually is.

To draw any hard line between 'ancient' and 'modern' history in 476, or any other year, is absolutely impossible. Yet, in one sense, the words 'ancient' and 'modern' have a very definite meaning. 'Ancient' may mean Greek and Roman, 'modern' what, in a vague sense, we may call Teutonic. But in this sense there are more than a thousand years which form the common ground of both. 'Modern' elements first appear when the weapons of Roman and Teuton first clashed together. 'Ancient' elements have not died out till the Byzantine and Trapezuntine empires, nay, till the Pisan and Florentine republics, have vanished from the map of Europe. The truth is, that the popular mind has hardly got beyond the narrow limits of England and France. Indeed, writers like Hallam and Guizot, valuable as they are within those limits, quite fail to convey those wider notions of European history of which

Mr. Finlay and Sir Francis Palgrave are the chief apostles. And Oxford legislation, on these points, has throughout represented the popular mind in its very smallest forms. It is impossible to believe that the framers of the statute of the first paper of recommendations had the faintest notion that the two great classic peninsulas still existed throughout the mediæval times, and still recognised sovereigns who were the lineal political successors of the ancient Cæsars. Something new was wanted, and they put on something in the most hurried way, without any thought whether the something was really what was wanted or not.

What is wanted is, either a distinct school of history, including 'ancient' and 'modern' alike, or else a sort of federal union between the schools of classical literature and 'modern' history. In this latter case the amount of ancient history in the classical school should be increased, so as to leave no gap between it and the purely historical school. And no one should be allowed to stand for honours in the history school who had not obtained at least a third class in the other. That is to say, no one should be allowed to take up Eginhard without a certificate that he had read Thucydides. In this case it would probably be best to extend the amount of Grecian history taken in the classical school, so as to bring it down to the days of Aratus and the last Spartan Heracleids, and to remove the whole Roman history to the separate history school. We should then get an unbroken range from Romulus to the last Constantine. Far less time than was formerly the case should be given to the doubtful details of Livy's first decade, and far more to the all-important Hannibalian and Macedonian wars. In both schools the texts of a good selection of original authorities should be thoroughly mastered, and the best modern writers be freely used as subsidiary helps, but not allowed to usurp the place of those whom they illustrate.

One enemy still remains to be dealt with. In the pithy phrase of a venerable Examiner, now no more, 'Delendus est David.' We well remember our amazement when we first read that the so-called 'History' of Hume was the recognized text-book in the new school. We turned round and asked whether they had burned Thucydides and taken to Mitford. In so doing, we paid Hume a very undeserved compliment. Mitford, with all his blunders, all his unfairness, is worthy of lasting gratitude as the first writer who found out that the old Greeks were men of like passions with ourselves, capable of exciting human interests and emotions, and whose political history was full of practical lessons for all time. In the case of Hume's treatment of mediæval history, thickset as the narrative

is with particular blunders, it is hardly worth while to stop to refute them; the whole composition is itself one vast blunder. Whatever may have been Hume's merits in other respects, he was simply incapable of understanding the middle ages. Indeed, he seems incapable of understanding any type of humanity except a well-bred Scotchman or Frenchman of the eighteenth century. It shows how far the study of mediæval history lags behind that of Greece and Rome, that Hume's history still retains its popularity, while the corresponding works on ancient times have sunk into oblivion, and that the best substitute in our own language is the work of Lingard, which, we need hardly say, with all its sterling merit, falls very far below the standard of Arnold and Thirlwall. In no point of reform have reforming Examiners found greater difficulty than in striving to substitute Lingard for Hume. The proposal has disturbed the equanimity of the Hebdomadal Council: it has brought down on the Examiners the anathemas of the Protestant Alliance. The undergraduates, excepting a few of the better classmen, commonly stick to Hume with a sort of abject superstition. That his book of fables is other than infallible truth, that English history has been dealt with by other and more trustworthy writers, are ideas which the academical youth seem totally unable to grasp. With some, indeed, the idolatry of Hume seems to be a sort of worship of an unknown god: they cannot even tell the name of their idol; when asked their authority for some wild assertion, they refer you, not to Hume, but to '*the book*,' or '*the history*.'

Finally, if the University wishes really to promote historical study, it must recast its system of historical Examiners and of historical Professors. It must also learn that in this lower world very few things are to be done without money. The University, which can spend its thousands after thousands on the graceful luxury of the New Museum, devotes the magnificent sum of 150*l.* per annum to the promotion of historical learning. Its historical staff consists of three Professors and three Examiners: the former receive nothing from the academical funds; the latter, for one of the most hardworked and thankless of offices, receive, each time of examination, the sum of 25*l.* each, seasoned with whatever amount of official insult and discouragement may seem good to the authorities for the time being. If the University really cannot afford a better stipend than this to some of its most important officers, it would be better at once to make the place avowed honorary, and to recognise Examiners as a dignified branch of the great unpaid. As to the three Professors of Ecclesiastical, Ancient, and Modern History, the teaching of the former, admirable as it is under the present eloquent Professor, has but

little direct reference to the degree examinations. Of the other two, it is quite possible that in the one case a never-ending attempt to determine the value of the Parian Chronicle may be of some real, though certainly rather mysterious benefit; while in the other the overthrow of specious fallacies, the re-establishment of common sense, common morality, and the common laws of evidence, form on the part of the present Modern History Professor a more indisputable claim to the admiration of Oxford and of the world. But with Professors of 'Ancient' and of 'Modern' History, our old difficulty meets us afresh. Who is to draw the line between the proper functions of each? There are, as we have seen, a thousand years and more in which each is equally at home. The truth is, that though a hard twofold division of history is utterly impossible, yet a threefold one is both natural and convenient. History is one great drama, but it easily divides itself into three acts. All parts of it require the same faculties, but no man can be equally master of all; and different periods are more calculated to interest and attract different minds. No man is fit to be a historical teacher who is absolutely ignorant of any portion of European history; but the most profound scholar will have his particular portions, which he knows in their minutest details, while he is content with a more general acquaintance with other periods. It will be hardly possible to find a man equally versed in ancient, in mediæval, and in modern history. A Professor, who has devoted year after year to Athens in the time of Socrates, or even one who has, at one blow, recovered the reign of Henry VIII. to the domain of reason and history, is not necessarily the one best fitted to expound the position of the Leos and the Constantines, of Theodoric, Charlemagne, and Otto. A distinct chair of mediæval history is an imperative want in the University. The duties of the three officers could then be defined with tolerable precision. The Ancient Professor would terminate his labours with the first appearance of the Teutonic element, the modern would commence his with the final extinction of the Roman element. The intermediate centuries would naturally fall to their mediæval brother. Till this is done, it is clear that the boundary must be unsettled, and that each professor may be tempted to razzias into the dominions of the other. As they now stand, the Ancient Professor has an indisputable claim to the Roman Emperors of the fifteenth century; but the Modern Professor has a claim no less indisputable to the English Kings of the fifth. But let the debatable territory be erected into an independent state, and all such diplomatic difficulties will be avoided, while its internal government will probably be far better managed than if it is intrusted to its neighbour on either side.

X.

AUSTRIAN ITALY.

1. *Milano e il suo Territorio.* Milano. 1844.
2. *Venezia e le sue Lagune.* Venezia. 1847.
3. *La Proprietà Fondiaria e le Popolazioni Agricole in Lombardia, studj economici di Stefano Jacini.* Terza Edizione. Milano. 1857.
4. *Sulle Condizioni economiche della Provincia di Sondrio.* Stefano Jacini. Seconda Edizione. Milano-Verona. 1858.
5. *Sull' Agricoltura nelle Provincie Venete.* Collotta.
6. *Sulla necessità razionale e legislativa di accordare al Regno Lombardo-Veneto la perequazione della sua Imposta Prediale con quella delle Provincie Tedesche dell' Impero.* Pasini. Venezia. 1858.

ITALY and the Italians are once more foremost in the thoughts of the statesmen of Europe. Never, indeed, for nearly half a century, since the settlement of Europe in 1814, have the eyes of all who are solicitous for the peaceful advance of social and political improvement been turned away from that country; and whatever hopes or anxieties have heretofore been felt are now heightened to intensity by the uncertain condition of the Continent, and the anticipation of a war of which Italy would be at once the field and the object. It is impossible for an Englishman used to take a share in political affairs to unfix his attention from a drama in which such tremendous issues are involved—directly, the welfare of millions and the destiny of the fairest region of Europe—indirectly, the condition of the entire community of civilised nations. But in these days he must consider that he is more than a mere spectator of passing events. The times in which we live have cast positive duties and responsibilities upon every one of us, who either influence the opinions of others or exercise the elective franchise. Public opinion—that is to say the impression prevailing among the classes who hold political power—now controls the action of our government in regard to every matter on which it is strongly expressed; and it is clear that the British public will no longer be satisfied with simple confidence in the foreign policy of a popular minister, but will from time to time intervene to regulate,

whether wisely or the reverse, the course which the country is to pursue.

If this be so, it is time to ask how far we are prepared to exercise a power so important, and, if abused, so disastrous to others and to ourselves. We are not, indeed, so far advanced as our neighbours in France, where the first man one meets in a railway carriage, though he is unable to take the smallest share in the management of his own *commune* or department, is ready to pronounce offhand a discourse on the politics and social condition of one's own or any other country that happens to be named; and where one does not know which most to wonder at, the audacity of the judgments delivered on all things human and divine, the fluency and the neatness of the language in which they are expressed, or the astounding ignorance and disregard of facts by which they are accompanied. There is a spice of good sense in the composition of most Englishmen which saves them from making an ostentatious display of their ignorance; but while there is an increasing tendency amongst us to form and to express opinions on questions of foreign policy, it may be feared that this has not been accompanied by much additional knowledge of the institutions, the manners, and the feelings of the people concerned.

In truth, such knowledge as would really be desirable it is nearly impossible to acquire. Many have begun to find out of late how difficult it is, even in our own country, for people of different station in society, educated with different ideas and prejudices, fully to understand one another. The same words and phrases do not convey the same ideas; and it is by slow degrees only, with patience and mutual good will, that we get to know what is passing in each other's minds. How vastly is this difficulty increased when it is complicated by a difference of race or creed! How many of the Scotch settlers in Ireland have got to understand the people, or could be trusted to give a sound opinion where their feelings or interests are concerned? Or would our countrymen north of the Tweed feel much confidence, upon any matter in which Scotch feelings or ideas were involved, in the judgment of the Southrons who annually pass through the land as tourists, or follow grouse and deer on the moors of their Highland counties? But when we come to deal with a foreign country, where we encounter at once diversities of language, manners, traditions, and national character, it may safely be said that the barriers to complete knowledge are nearly insurmountable, and that very few men are competent to form an independent judgment of the true condition of a country not

their own, of the circumstances that fit existing institutions to the wants of the people, or of those that justify and require social and political change.

If these considerations were oftener weighed, their chief result probably might be to dissuade prudent men from seeking to interfere even indirectly with the concerns of other nations; but we have no faith in the prevalence of such a feeling, or even in the possibility of maintaining any such self-denying ordinance. Commerce and increased intercourse are fast drawing together the people of all civilised countries into one commonwealth: already it is no exaggeration to say that they have a common purse, and that distress or disorder in any one of them is in some measure shared by all. Wisely, or not, the people of this country will pronounce their opinions, and short of complete knowledge there is a moderate share of correct information as to the state of other countries and their institutions, which would go far to prevent serious error, and which it is really important that the classes who use political power should possess. At this moment, when there is no knowing but that the condition of Italy will be discussed at every hustings within a few months, we know of no public service that would be more useful than to diffuse correct information by which to guide and correct the popular opinion on a point where a wrong decision may be disastrous alike to the cause of freedom in Italy, and to the honour and influence of England throughout the world. The need of such information, accurate and dispassionate, is the greater, that a large portion of what is now addressed to the British public is calculated to do positive mischief by propagating partial and false views, coloured by the excited feelings of men whose position makes justice and moderation impossible to them. Of the large number of Italians living in this country the majority are political refugees—a fact in itself speaking ill for the existing institutions of their country, but one which should put us on our guard against placing implicit faith in their testimony. There are among them sincere and earnest men, who have made great sacrifices for their convictions; but their evidence in the cause between themselves and the governments they have sought to overthrow, is by itself little more to be relied upon than that which Messrs. Mitchell and Meagher lay before the people of the United States in their temperate and impartial journals. In another class of newspapers, circulating amongst the countrymen of the last-named patriots, Italian affairs are no less systematically misrepresented by Roman Catholic writers, who are under the delusion that the cause of their religion is served

by maintaining the excellence of the present political constitution of the Papal States.

It is far from our design, even though our limits should permit us to do so, to discuss the vast and complicated questions which arise in connection with the present and the future of Italy. A long and intimate acquaintance with every class of the population, and with men of the most varied political convictions, has served to increase our sense of the difficulty of thoroughly knowing the country and the people, and to make us shrink from sweeping conclusions as to the character of men and institutions, or dogmatic judgments upon projects for either overturning or amending them. A few general conclusions may, indeed, safely be drawn. The internal condition of Piedmont is on the whole satisfactory. In spite of much violence and folly among the two extreme parties—notwithstanding an unreasonable tone of impatience and dissatisfaction among many of the educated classes, who seem not yet to have learned that no system of human affairs is absolutely perfect, and that some price, although a moderate one, must be paid for the advantages of free institutions—the country is prospering; and it may confidently be hoped that there is enough of education and of natural good sense among the middle classes—more numerous and influential than elsewhere in Italy—to keep the balance tolerably steady between the extremes of political party. The real danger to Piedmontese freedom is to be sought for elsewhere than in domestic differences.

Looking to the opposite extremity, politically as well as geographically, of the peninsula, at that fair but unhappy region that stretches from Terracina to the further headlands of Calabria, but one concurrent testimony is given by almost every voice save that of the paid creatures of the court. We cannot be far wrong in believing that Naples and prostrate Sicily, under a government not less cowardly than cruel, with a monarch who repels the services of every man of honesty and intelligence, and intrusts unlimited power to a corrupt and ferocious police, present the saddest spectacle of misgovernment, the minimum alike of order and liberty, that can be found among the so-called civilised nations of the earth. But those who best know the country will most hesitate to pronounce on the real state of the minds of the people, and to decide whether despotism has completed its work in effacing the desire for better things; whether the reaction, whenever Providence shall relieve the two Sicilies from the Bourbon yoke, would take the shape of a mere blind thirst for vengeance; or, on the other hand, what elements of good still survive, and what

hope remains of reconstructing society out of what may still be uncorrupt.

Many of those who have followed us so far will expect us to go farther. They will point to the presence of foreign bayonets, to French troops in Rome, to Austrians at Ferrara and Bologna, but chiefly to the existence of Austrian rule in Lombardy and Venice, and ask whether these are not utterly irreconcilable with the natural rights of the Italian people. We understand and respect the feeling in an Italian breast that rises to protest against these things; but we must remark, in the first place, that however just the conclusion may be in which we are asked to join, it is of quite a different order from those which we have already expressed. The progress of Piedmont, the atrocities of the Neapolitan government, are facts; the right of the Italian people to self-government is a theory, or a principle, which it becomes us as foreigners to examine with due care before we make it a rule for action. Such an inquiry we do not propose to extend to the Roman States. It must involve topics as to which very few men in this country can pretend to be impartial judges; and though it is but too evident that, apart from all ecclesiastical considerations, the civil government of those states is in a thoroughly unsatisfactory state, we would strongly impress on our readers the conviction, that whenever the time may come for reforming it, the most wise and seemly course for the British government will be to abstain from the semblance as well as the reality of interference. The last year has shown how sensitive the people of this country are to the meddling of any foreign power, even though a neighbour and ally, in our domestic legislation. We can fancy how they would receive intelligence that the Catholic Powers of Europe had communicated to Lord Derby their views as to the new Reform Bill. Let them be persuaded that the appearance of a British minister on the stage of Roman politics excites feelings of a precisely similar nature through a great part of the Continent. Lord Minto's mission should serve, if for nothing else, as a lesson to future governments. The cabinet of Lord John Russell did not, and could not, foresee the storm that was gathering when their envoy was despatched to Rome to promote the peaceful development of liberal institutions? But what was the result? The general belief on the Continent to the present day attributes to the English ministry no other object than that of upsetting at all hazards the government of the Pope: Italian ultra-liberals upbraid us with the disappointment of hopes which the mere presence of the British envoy had excited and sustained; and even the few men of the constitutional party

who did justice to his intentions have not ceased to regard his appearance on the scene as unfortunate for the cause which he, as well as they, had at heart. It was a delusion, however, to suppose that, even under less adverse circumstances, that mission could have been of use. An English minister in Rome, avowedly on Italian and not on English business, was condemned to universal suspicion. Who on the Continent would believe that the first of Protestant powers sincerely desired to strengthen the throne of the Pope by reconciling under a constitutional system the rights of the sovereign with the welfare and contentment of his subjects? Whenever that or any other useful change is to be effected in the Roman states, Englishmen may rest satisfied that it is their 'mission' to take no part in the business, and to turn their attention and their active sympathies elsewhere.

Our scope, however, in the present article is limited to the portion of Italy subject to Austria, nearly all included in the so-called kingdom of Venetian Lombardy.¹ We wish to give a sketch—necessarily a slight and hurried one—of its present condition, industrial and social, as well as political; not only because it is the point to which the attention of Europe is most especially directed at this moment, but because we know that the impressions regarding it that prevail in this country are in great measure ill founded, and that on many points of interest and importance, the English public is without information. Our object is to state facts, most of them derived from personal knowledge of the country: we shall be sparing of inferences; and in those which we do draw we shall strive to keep clear of the exaggerations which are habitual to men whose feelings are engaged on one side or the other of Italian politics, and endeavour to regard the character of the people and that of their government with the same impartiality that we desire on the part of foreigners who study our own history and institutions.

We lay down the last rule deliberately. The enemies of England abroad make it a continual taunt, and even her well-wishers admit the charge, that our zeal for liberty out of our own country is sheer hypocrisy; and they are able to point to a good many awkward facts in recent as well as past history that seem to show that we sometimes forget to apply to our

¹ The English name which has crept of late years into official papers is incorrect, but cannot be conveniently replaced. We have no equivalent for the Italian designation which is indifferently used in the form *Regno Lombardo-Veneto*, or *Regno Veneto-Lombardo*.

own conduct the rules that we try to enforce upon others. However unjust we may feel the imputation on our sincerity, there is no denying that our writers and public men often attack foreign governments on points where our own is no less open to censure, and lay down principles for their guidance that have never been admitted to regulate our own national policy. Englishmen, who for centuries have had a Lombardy across the Irish Channel, who have at this moment on their hands Mauritius and Trinidad, Guiana, Malta, Heligoland, with half a dozen other islands peopled by French and Spanish, Dutch and Dane, besides protecting, against their will, the 'illustrious race' of the Ionian Republic—to say nothing of the dusky myriads of Asiatic subjects now brought under the direct authority of the British crown—should either prepare to give practical proof on a gigantic scale of their respect for independent nationalities, or consent to apply to others the same rules by which they measure their own title to sovereignty over the people of so many various races. When a foreigner takes the liberty of reminding us of our position in these and other portions of our vast empire, we explain to him the circumstances under which our rule was commenced and is now maintained; we point to its practical results as shown in the condition of the people; and should he be still unconvinced, we insist that he should show what plan of government he proposes to substitute for that now existing, and prove that the change would be likely to conduce to the welfare of the governed.

Inviting our readers to apply some such rule in examining the position of the Austrian government in Italy, we now attempt to describe the territory over which the rule of that government extends. In this undertaking we have derived much assistance from the works whose titles we have prefixed to this article. The first two are splendid specimens of the munificence which the municipalities of Italy still know how to display on fitting occasions. The congress of the Italian men of science held its annual meeting in 1844 at Milan, and in 1847 that which was destined to be its last gathering, at Venice. On each occasion the local municipal bodies appointed a committee of the most competent literary and scientific men among the citizens to draw up a work in which the history, the art, the institutions, and the natural history of the city and its adjoining territory should be set forth. Milan produced two, Venice four large and handsome volumes, which were presented to each member of the congress. They present a considerable amount of valuable information. The historical sketch of Venice, which is no mere compilation, contains much that is

new as well as interesting, especially regarding the last century of the existence of the Republic. We have not found elsewhere any details respecting the political contests between the party of the so-called '*poor nobles*' and the Council of Ten which resulted in 1780 in the exile of Giorgio Pisani, and the imprisonment of his chief partisans. The history of the entire period still exists, as we believe, in Venice in the unpublished manuscript of Franceschi.

The works of M. Jacini have obtained great and merited popularity in his own country. They do not, indeed, possess, or aim at, scientific completeness; the statistical details are not always perfectly correct, nor is the reasoning at all times unassailable; but in the compass of a small volume much valuable information regarding the agriculture and social condition of the country is brought together, and discussed with modesty and good sense. The tone of the work is marked by an absence of exaggeration which is not common among modern Italian writers, and the author does not shrink from pointing out calmly but firmly several of the errors and shortcomings of the existing government.

The small pamphlet regarding the direct taxation of real property, to which we shall again refer, is written with such remarkable ability that we earnestly desire that the author should continue to devote his talents to the discussion of public affairs. It cannot be said that even in the present state of Austrian Italy there is no scope for useful exertion in this respect. Chiefly to this pamphlet a recent important concession of the Austrian government is to be attributed.

We now ask our readers to glance for a moment at the map of Upper Italy. From the east to the west in sinuous course, and buttressed by many lesser ranges, stretches the great wall of the Alps—about 350 miles from the Terglou in Carniola to Mont Blanc. At this mighty corner-stone it bends abruptly to the south, and approaching the Mediterranean divides into lesser branches, the chief of which extends back again to the eastward through the so-called Maritime Alps parallel to the main chain, till within sight of the Adriatic the last spurs of the Apennine subside into the plain near to Faenza. From crest to crest of the opposing ridges the great valley of the Po is nowhere more than 150 miles wide; but along its northern boundary the minor ranges that branch out like ribs from the backbone of the Alps, stretching irregularly to the southward, form an extensive highland region intersected by deep secondary valleys. In the western half of the main Po valley these encroach far upon the plains,

and are but narrow glens that barely give passage to impetuous torrents, swollen at one season by the melting snows of the upper region, and at another by the profuse rains that mark the rapid transition from summer to winter, but even during the hottest and driest season are fed by the great glaciers of the Pennine and Graian Alps. These natural conditions mark the physical character and the boundaries of Piedmont. Of level country there is but little. The region lying northward from the Maritime Alps, and Ligurian Apennine, and from thence to the outer ranges of the Alps, is intersected by hills. The streams, even the central Po that receives them all as tributaries, are turbid from the mass of detritus with which they are heavily charged; and, varying continually in volume, are quite unserviceable for navigation, and but sparingly available for irrigation. Hence the prevailing agricultural produce is that which may either be raised on undulating and broken ground, regardless of heat and summer drought, or else grown in small patches near the banks of streams and in the bottoms of glens. Wine, wheat, and in the warmer parts, the mulberry, belong to the first, hemp and maize to the second category. Of maize, the production is far short of the consumption. Rice is limited to the low country near to the eastern boundary.

Adjoining Piedmont, with no natural limit but the river Tessin to separate them, and no profound difference of race, language, or religion to keep them apart, is a territory even superior in natural and artificial advantages, but with a widely-different destiny. Venetian Lombardy—from the crest of the Alps to the Po, from the Tessin to the Isonzo—is indeed a wonderful region. In none other, perhaps, have the genius and industry of man done so much within a narrow space to serve and to adorn the dwelling-place of so great a population. The most inattentive traveller is struck with admiration when, within a space less than half of Ireland, after such cities as Venice and Milan, Verona and Padua, he finds that the second-rate towns are Mantua, Brescia, Vicenza, Bergamo, Udine, and a dozen others, each of which would, in any other country, raise astonishment at the beauty and stateliness of its public and private edifices; and when at every few miles of his route he passes through some walled burgh, scarcely named in his guide-book, yet rich in various monuments of art; while, as he traverses the admirable roads that cover the plains in a continuous network, and ascend even the least accessible valleys, he sees that the country-houses of the gentry are palaces, and the dwellings of the peasantry massive buildings that surpass in size and solidity,

though not in comfort and cleanliness, the farm-houses of England. If he examines more closely into the means by which the productiveness of the land is constantly maintained, he will discover that in the elaborate system of canals, water-courses, bridges, and sluices by which, throughout whole provinces, the waters of the Alps are brought to irrigate every square perch of the surface, there is invested an amount of capital, of human labour made available for future production, scarcely less than what has produced the entire railway system of Great Britain.

In wealth and fertility, Lombardy far surpasses Venice, and chiefly owing to a natural advantage which has been admirably improved by the skill and industry of its people. In the central region of the Alps the valleys opening to the south are much wider, and especially much deeper, than elsewhere. They form reservoirs in which the waters of the greater torrents accumulate into those lakes whose magical beauty has drawn strangers from every land to dwell upon their shores. From these issue forth abounding rivers of pure crystal, warmed by prolonged exposure to the sun, and regulated in their flow by the nearly constant level of the lakes, which are fullest at the commencement of summer, when the sun has loosened the piled-up snows of the Rhætian Alps. Agricultural chemistry notwithstanding, the chief and almost only essentials for vegetation are heat and moisture. In hot countries, if you can secure a copious and unceasing supply of water, the earth will produce whatsoever you please to call from it. The rivers of Lombardy supplied the primary requisite for fertility. Man has done the rest. The Tessin, the Adda, the Oglio, the Chiese, and the Mincio, issue forth from so many lakes, and traverse the whole breadth of the plains on their way to join the Po. From the upper part of the course of each stream main channels have been excavated, many of them forming navigable canals, and by a branching network, almost as complex as that which brings the blood to every minute portion of the skin, fertility is diffused through every field by the ducts which enable the cultivator to turn on the stream of irrigation and to remove at the same time the superfluous waters. To effect this, it was not enough to construct—for the most part in solid masonry—an infinite number of watercourses at various levels, and supplied with proper sluices; it was necessary to remodel the surface of the country, so that each field should have that gentle slope which would make the supply of water available to every part of it. It is scarcely possible to compute the amount of labour that must have been expended in the course of centuries

in fashioning the irrigated districts of Lombardy into the shape in which we now see them. It is true that the entire country is far from having attained to the perfection which marks the state of certain districts. Some considerable portions are above the level of the lakes and greater streams. Save here and there, by means of local springs, they are beyond the reach of irrigation. The larger part has nevertheless been brought into cultivation; but there are tracts of which the soil is too light and naturally barren to grow anything beyond stunted heather, thinly mixed with coarse herbage. Of less extent are the marshes near to the Po, which have hitherto resisted all attempts at drainage, and are not only lost to cultivation, but give rise to pestilential fevers. Irrespective of these natural obstacles, enterprise and industry have been comparatively deficient in the eastern provinces of Lombardy. While three-fourths of the entire province of Lodi is irrigated, three-fifths of Cremona, and nine-tenths of Mantua, both provinces lying in the plain, are still unsupplied. If what has been already done gives abundant proof of the extraordinary results to be obtained by this process, what yet remains unaccomplished shows that a large application of capital is still requisite to raise the condition of Lombardy to that pitch of productiveness which it is capable of attaining.

Irrigation is far from being the only form in which the industry of the Lombard population has been effectual in developing production under circumstances where nature has been unpropitious. In the middle region between the Alps and the plains, the precipitous faces of the hills have almost universally been brought into cultivation. Wherever there is enough of soil, the entire slope is laid out in terraces, often not more than six or eight feet wide, with very steep banks of green turf, which is kept constantly cut for fodder. With proper outlets for the diluvial rains of spring and autumn, these terraces endure long, and produce considerable and varied crops of maize, millet, buckwheat, and other grain, besides vines, and occasionally mulberries. But the desire to extend the culture of the grape in spots where, till the calamitous disease of the last seven years, wine has been the staple produce of the soil, has suggested other contrivances. Much wine, and that of the best quality, was obtained from the steep sides of limestone rocks, so bare that none but the slenderest and hardiest herbs nestled in their crevices. By the obstinate and untiring labour of small peasant-proprietors, baskets of earth, borne up on their backs, and propped up with fragments of rock, give support to vines that hang in scarcely accessible ledges on the flanks of the narrow valleys. In one of the tributary glens of the Val

Tellina—the Val Masino—which is nearly choked up in parts by enormous loose blocks fallen from the mountains above, we have seen with surprise another specimen of the industry and ingenuity of the Lombard mountain population. To each of the scattered rocks that presents a moderately flat surface, a rude ladder, made out of a single pine trunk, is affixed. Earth has been carried up in sufficient quantity to form a layer upon the top, and from the little gardens thus constructed, an early crop of potatoes is raised.

The eastern boundary of Lombardy lies between the Mincio and the Adige. Thence to the Adriatic and the frontier of Illyria extends the territory now forming the eight Austrian provinces of the government of Venice, once, along with a large portion of Lombardy, subject to the Venetian republic. Of rather greater extent than Lombardy, it supports a smaller population, and is considerably less productive.¹ This relative inferiority may be attributed in some measure to a deficiency in agricultural knowledge and skill, but mainly to natural causes. The southern districts of the Venetian territory lie within the ancient deltas of the Po and the Adige, and raised but a few feet above the level of the Adriatic. In the natural course of geological change, each of those rivers being charged with an immense load of fine detritus, would have spread this over the low lands in the seasons of periodical inundation, and thus, in the lapse of centuries, have raised their level above the ordinary height of the waters. But unfortunately for the present population, their country was one of the earliest seats of civilisation in Europe. The Etruscan engineers are said to have been the first to devise the system of embankments by which

¹ The following comparative Table is taken from the '*Tafelu zur Statistik der oesterreichischen Monarchie*' for 1851.

	LOMBARDY.	VENICE.
Total population	2,744,118	2,279,999
Acres in cultivation	2,479,824	2,406,838
— in pasture	515,538	1,028,321
— in wood, including chestnut	835,379	735,310
— mountain and waste	1,457,533	1,680,266
Total area	5,288,274	5,850,734
Estimated gross produce of agriculture, live stock, timber, &c., in £ sterling	£ 16,000,000	11,500,000

The last item must be considered as no more than a rough approximation to the truth.

these rivers have been gradually raised to their present perilous elevation. As long as the force of a current of water is increasing, it deposits none of the sand or mud that it carries along, but, as soon as the stream begins to slacken, it lets fall, first the heavier, and then the lighter, materials with which it is laden. Hence, if a river be kept artificially within its banks at the time of a flood, it will end by depositing in its own bed a large part of the sand and mud which the mountain torrents have carried into it. Save at the height of the flood, a small part only of the additional burden will reach the sea. The effect of this process, continued for more than two thousand years, may be seen in the present condition of the Lower Po, and that of the Adige is little less formidable. Higher and higher, in each succeeding century, has risen the level of the waters, higher and higher have risen the embankments, until they have fairly hoisted up, far over the level of the surrounding country, above the towers of Ferrara and hundreds of smaller towns and villages, a mass of water greater at certain seasons than is carried down by any other river of Europe. The danger of living beside a volcano is trifling compared to that of the inhabitants of these districts. We well recollect a night on the bank of the Adige during an October flood. The barge of the flying bridge had been carried away. A large breach in the embankment had opened itself two or three miles below the ferry-house, and a torrent was pouring through it to inundate the lower country. Alarming reports were brought in, threatening a new breach just above our position, in which case our retreat would have been entirely cut off. When the morning broke, and we rose from the bank on which we had slept in a travelling cloak, the flood was at its height, and the effect of the great turbid river hurrying onward in eddying rapids was heightened by the gloom of a sky lined with leaden clouds. The breach below us was continually increasing in depth and width, and if it had enlarged so as to reach the ordinary level of the waters, inevitable destruction must have spread over a vast tract of fertile country. The subsidence of the flood soon delivered the inhabitants from their peril and allowed us before evening to cross the river in a small boat.

Apart from the danger of their position, the districts to which we refer suffer much from the want of adequate means of drainage. Extensive works, intended to meet this evil, have been in progress for some years, and valuable results have already been obtained.

If part of the Venetian territory suffers from excess of water, a much larger portion is exposed to the opposite evil. East-

ward from the Adige, each of the principal streams makes its way separately to the Adriatic, without encountering a lake in which to purify its waters, and regulate its volume.

The Carnic Alps, which separate Friuli from the head waters of the Drave and the Save, are nearly devoid of permanent snow, while their southern slopes are compensated by an amount of rain-fall greater than is known in any other part of Europe. The south wind bears against their flanks currents of heated air charged with moisture from the Adriatic, which is rapidly condensed into torrents of rain such as are rarely seen out of the tropics. At Udine and other points nearer to the mountains the rain-gauge has shown an annual fall of from 60 to over 100 inches of rain. Had these mountains retained their natural covering—pine and larch above, beech and oak in the middle region, chesnut below—with the abundant vegetation that gathers in damp situations sheltered by trees, this copious supply of water would percolate slowly from the mountains to the plains, and maintain during the greater part of the year an ample supply in the chief streams. Improvidence and ignorance have led to the destruction of the forests, of which scanty remnants alone now remain. That beautiful mountain range which the traveller watches to the northward as he crosses the Adriatic from Venice to Trieste, changing its hue as the day advances from ashy gray to blue, and then to a faint shadowy purple, is seen by those who penetrate its valleys to be almost completely bare of vegetation. Where large forests once extended, the waters have carried away the soil, no longer withheld by the roots of trees, and left stony deserts on a scale more gigantic than Petra, such as may be seen about the sources of the Tagliamento and the Isonzo. The consequences have been alike singular and disastrous. He who for the first time ascends one of the outer mountain summits commanding a view over the plain of Friuli, that stretches level as the sea from the foot of the Alps to the lagoons of the coast, is astonished to see the entire surface, as far as the eye can reach, at intervals of ten miles and less, scarred by broad white bands that reach from the mountains nearly to the shore of the lagoon. These are the dry beds of rivers, raging torrents after a storm, that a few days later dwindle into miserable rivulets. It is commonly but erroneously supposed that the enormous mass of *ghiara* or shingle that cover these bare river beds, sometimes two or three miles in width, has been transported from the mountains to its present position by the existing streams. In truth, however, the entire plain of Friuli consists of a deposit of coarse limestone gravel, identical with that of the river beds,

and thinly covered over with one or two feet of light soil. The streams do no more than peel off this upper covering of the plain which by irrigation might have been enabled to rival the productiveness of Lombardy. In its present condition it is parched during part of the year, and, during the other part, exposed to furious torrents that are continually eating away their own banks and leaving exposed a larger and larger breadth of barren desolate shingle. Three means have been suggested for contending against the influences which threaten to turn this region into a desert—irrigation, by conveying to the surface of the plain whatever permanent supplies of water can be made available—embankments, that shall protect the land fit for cultivation from further destruction—the restoration of the forests, whereby the course of the mountain streams would be regulated and equalised. The first remedy is the most practicable: something has been done already; and if peace permit further progress, considerable works now projected may be brought to completion. Embankments are costly and not free from evils of their own, yet the peculiar circumstances of Friuli absolutely require their construction; and the existing beds of the streams are so extensive that the evils created by the embankment of such rivers as the Po and the Adige could not well be repeated here. The renovation of the forests would, no doubt, be most important to the future prosperity of this province, and generally throughout the entire territory; but it is a process most difficult in itself and encompassed with obstacles of various kinds. The people of the mountain valleys do not see the importance of the question to themselves as well as their neighbours in the plains. So far from undoing the mischief accomplished by their fathers, the *communes*, who are the chief proprietors of timber, are disposed to aggravate it by cutting down and selling the remains of ancient forests that still adorn some of the valleys. Compulsory legislation is scarcely practicable, and would be contrary to the present tendency of the government; and it may be feared that towards this great object little or nothing will be done in our day.

The region intermediate between Lombardy and Friuli, including the provinces of Vicenza, Padua, and Treviso, is watered by the Brenta and the Piave, both nourished in part by streams from the snowy Alps. Irrigation has been introduced here and there, but in the far larger portion where it is not extended, agriculture suffers severely from the long-continued drought of ordinary summers. Rain in July and August, so dreaded by the British farmer, is the best security for an abundant harvest.

Placed midway between the equator and the pole, the low

country between Venice and the Tessin enjoys a mean temperature of from 55° to 56° Fahrenheit; but, as Dove has shown in his excellent maps, the winters are as cold as those of the coldest part of England, while the summers are those of the Canary Islands. Destructive hailstorms are frequent in summer and do much damage to the crops, especially those of wheat and rice.

The disease of the grape has caused of late years much suffering to the poor, and heavy loss to the landed proprietors. Save in certain places that have unaccountably escaped, the destruction of this staple produce has been more complete and longer continued than anywhere in Europe. At the ordinary valuation, the loss to Venetian Lombardy on each of the last six years has been little less than three millions sterling.

As that has abated, a new and equally formidable plague has appeared. A hitherto unknown disease in the silkworm, that kills the animal before it commences to spin the cocoon, has appeared in many parts of the south of Europe. The possible consequences to a country that produces raw silk to the value of nearly 4,000,000*l.* a year, and whose chief manufacture depends upon the same material, may be easily conceived. What should we not apprehend from a disease in the cotton plant, if Lancashire were supplied from the south of England instead of the United States?

Among the prominent characteristics of Venetian Lombardy we must note the extent and excellence of the roads, scarcely equalled, and nowhere surpassed in Europe. The impulse given by the Austrian government, which during the last forty years has completed the admirable roads of the Stelvio, the Splügen, the Ampezzo, and the Tonal, has been continued and extended by the energy and sagacity of the people themselves. Magnificent roads now penetrate many of the remotest mountain valleys, tunnelling through projecting angles of rock, and bridging over ravines hundreds of feet above the stream. These have been designed and paid for by unions of *communes* consisting almost exclusively of small peasant proprietors. In Lombardy alone, it is estimated by Jacini that the new roads, made at the charge of the communes from 1835 to 1855, had cost forty millions of lire, or about 1,350,000*l.* of our money.

Railroads have not advanced nearly as fast as in Piedmont. For seven or eight years after 1848, most of the works previously in progress were suspended, and until 1857 Milan and Venice were not united together, while the government of Turin pressed forward the execution of those numerous lines that have so much contributed to the strength and resources of the country.

Next in importance to the main road connecting the two capitals, is the grand project, already partly completed, of a railway from Verona through the Tyrol, across the Brenner pass, and through the valley of the Inn to Rosenheim in the plain of Bavaria. The main difficulties, however, still remain to be encountered in the descent from Brixen to Botzen through the valley of the Eisack. It is a matter for speculation whether this enterprise or that of the tunnel through the chain of the Mont Cenis will soonest be completed, and which of the rival governments will first have the glory of laying an iron bridle over the hitherto untamed Alps. It is a further question how long both of these great works, along with so many other useful undertakings, will be delayed if the two countries are to be plunged in deadly warfare.

It is well known that, for its extent, the low country of Lombardy is the most populous in Europe. The entire of its nine provinces taken together measure less than Yorkshire and Lincolnshire united, and the area of the lower provinces is considerably smaller than that of the first of those counties. Including the entire of the vast and thinly-peopled mountain region, a population of 2,835,212 in 1854, gave an average of 343 inhabitants to the square mile. Belgium alone could match this, having 381. Yorkshire and Lincolnshire together had a population of 2,207,217 in 1851, of whom about one-half belong to the manufacturing district of the West Riding, yet the average is but 238 to the square mile. But if we take the five provinces of the plain of Lombardy, we find the extraordinary proportion of 528 inhabitants to every square mile, or more than one for every acre of land fit for cultivation, after allowing for roads, rivers, and waste. The Venetian provinces fall considerably short of this proportion, but they rank high amongst the most thickly-populated districts of Europe. As is natural in a fully-peopled agricultural country the rate of increase is but slow. It is estimated that rather less than one per cent. is yearly added to the population of the entire territory.

The silk manufactures had at one time greatly fallen off, but they have revived of late years. They give extensive employment to the female population, and have been the foundation of many large fortunes. The vast water-power of the country has of late years been applied to cotton-mills and to other branches of manufacture, and a considerable population is also engaged in the home and foreign trade; but the natural character of the territory and its inhabitants has made agriculture the main occupation of the great majority of the people. In this hurried sketch it is impossible to enter upon details that might be

interesting to some of our readers: we can do no more than broadly indicate the topics upon which, if space permitted, we should desire to speak more fully.

The condition and the methods of agriculture, and the social relations of the people who pursue it, conform to the three divisions into which the territory of Venetian Lombardy has been separated by nature—the alpine valleys, the outer slopes of the mountains, together with the upper plain country; lastly, the lower plains. They may be roughly characterised as the regions of wine and chesnuts, silk and wheat, cheese and rice.

Ancient custom, and the difficulty of communication with the outer world, have engaged the people of the mountain valleys in a struggle to raise upon the spot sufficient food for their own support, and the means of feeding a few cattle during the prolonged winter season. According to the soil and position, they grow patches of maize, millet, buckwheat, rye, and potatoes; and from every ledge and pinnacle of their rugged mountains they gather, literally in handfuls, the hay that is to carry their cattle through the winter. The only surplus produce, beyond a few sheep and some inferior cheese, are the chesnuts that are abundant in some of the warmer and more open valleys, and wine, produced by incredible exertion, generally on terraces built up against the faces of bare limestone rocks. The wines produced in these situations are usually much superior to those of the level country; and they formed a source of comparative wealth to the people of certain valleys, until the disease in the grape deprived them for several successive years of the entire fruit of their past industry. As a general rule, however, the produce of this region is quite inadequate to support the population. A large proportion find a subsistence elsewhere. During the summer some go to reap the harvest in the plains, or as shepherds to dwell on the upper pastures of the Alps; in winter a still larger number find employment in the towns; many go afar from their own country as emigrants, but not, like our own people, to settle permanently in a foreign land. The peasant of the Alps bears with him in his wanderings the fixed resolve to return one day to his native village, and to purchase a plot of ground on which to pass the remainder of his life, and for that object he will give a price out of all proportion to the economical value of the soil. In this region the land is universally in the hands of small proprietors, who lead a hard and laborious existence, but are perhaps more than compensated by the feeling of independence that accompanies the sense of possession. Certain it is that no lesser inducement would enable men to maintain the life-long struggle that alone enables the farmer to obtain any

produce from the soil in the midst of the gigantic and destructive agencies of nature that are perpetually at work in the valleys of the Alps.

A revolution is, however, impending over these people. New roads are fast giving them access to the plains, facilities for obtaining food from a distance, and gradually introducing new ideas. They will soon cease to look on tillage as their almost exclusive means of support, and betake themselves to their natural business—rearing sheep and horned cattle. In every year 50,000 Swiss cattle are brought in to supply the dairies of Lombardy, and as many more are introduced from the Tyrol into various parts of the territory. When the change which we predict has been effected, the country will emancipate itself from this heavy tribute of 1,000,000*l.* a year now sent across the Alps.

Let us now glance for a moment at the middle region between the mountains and the irrigated plain of the valley of the Po. If we pass through it on a *festa*, we hear on every side the bells pealing from square *campaniles*; frequent villages are alive with a vigorous and healthy population; and the land is covered with villas and farm-houses that creep up the slopes of the hills, and the outer spurs of the Alps. Wheat is the prevailing cereal, often followed in the autumn by a fast-growing variety of maize that ripens a moderate crop within fifty days, or even less, from the time when it is sown. But the chief feature in the landscape consists in the round-headed pollarded mulberries that in endless parallels cover the whole surface of the country. The olive, once not unfrequent, has been nearly driven out by the extension of silk cultivation. Vines are plentiful, for the most part trained on tall stakes that cross the fields in straight lines. The land produces much; but by improved management both the quality and quantity of produce might be largely increased. Subject to various modifications the prevailing system of tenure is that of *mezzeria*. The landlord provides the fixed capital—houses, farm-buildings, plantations of vine and mulberry, &c.—the tenant finds the circulating capital, including draught and dairy cattle, seed, and winter forage, as well as the ordinary farm implements. The annual produce of the land is divided between landlord and tenant, usually in equal proportions. Space does not allow us to describe other and more complicated arrangements that prevail in some parts of this region.

The agricultural system of the irrigated plain of Lombardy and Venice presents so much that is peculiar to itself, that it has attracted the attention of many writers both Italian and

foreign. The nature of the country has marked it out for rice cultivation and dairy farming, neither of which can be pursued with profit on a small scale. It is therefore a country of large farms, held, for the most part, by men of capital and education. The application of greater skill and intelligence has availed to bring the system of cultivation to a high degree of perfection; but unfortunately the condition of the labouring class, and especially of those who live under a system resembling the Irish con-acre, is very inferior to that of the people of the other parts of the territory. Their diet is, perhaps, sufficient, but deficient in variety; their habitations are often damp and unhealthy, and they suffer severely from endemic fevers.

We have marked the need for improvement in many branches of agriculture, and we may add that the importance of these and other practical reforms is recognised by many men of intelligence in the country. Increased interest in these questions has shown itself of late: various societies have been formed, and are engaged in spreading useful information. Some of the clergy have given a powerful impetus to the movement; but we regret that a class whose co-operation would be so valuable, are, in general, but slightly informed as to the principles of agriculture. In Italy, as well as in England, we earnestly desire to see instruction on that subject more generally spread amongst the rural clergy. Certain it is that, in spite of the flourishing condition of certain districts of Venetian Lombardy, there is ample room for improvements which would largely increase the wealth of the country and the physical well-being of the people. No effectual progress can, however, be hoped for while the shadow of war and political convulsion rests upon the minds of those whose co-operation is required.

With one serious drawback, the peasantry of Venetian Lombardy rank high as a moral and intelligent people. They drink rather largely on holidays, when wine is cheap, but are seldom quarrelsome in their cups. The main blot upon their character is the prevalence of rural theft, the suppression of which is a reform that demands the co-operation of all classes—the government, landed proprietors, clergy, and the people themselves. In the populous districts there are a large number of the peasantry who notoriously, almost openly, live by petty thieving of the fruits of the earth. They rear silkworms upon stolen mulberry leaves, feed themselves and their children upon Indian corn, vegetables, and fruit stolen at night from the fields as they are growing ripe, keep cattle with stolen hay and fodder; and all with complete impunity, rarely even molested if they keep out of more serious

crime. They usually retire when detected, but sometimes show fight and carry off their booty by main force. In such a case, where three thieves attacked and wounded a man who attempted to drive them from his own field, five or six days' imprisonment was thought quite a sufficient punishment.

Education is less universal among the poorer class than elsewhere in the Austrian empire. In Austria proper, out of every 1,000 of the population 160 attend school; in Lombardy the proportion is 103, and in the Venetian provinces no more than 52. Children are employed by their parents in the fields in the season of agricultural activity, and forget in the summer what they had learned in winter. Yet in point of book-learning the peasantry are far in advance of our own rural population, and several degrees beyond that of France.

In the department of higher education, ample facilities exist in the provincial towns, and in the two universities of Padua and Pavia. Upper schools (*ginnasii*), maintained by the state, by the municipalities of the cities, and by private foundations, coexist, and place instruction of a superior order within the reach of all who have the means to support themselves while pursuing their studies. Complaints are made that the system of instruction in most of these institutions is ill adapted to the wants of the present day. The teaching of practical science is scanty and incomplete, and in the whole country there is no such institution as an agricultural school. In this as well as other respects there is a disposition to reform abroad from which useful results may be safely expected.

Let us turn from the political and social to the political constitution of Austrian Italy. To understand it we must look back for a moment at the past history of the people.

The municipal institutions of Rome nowhere struck deeper root than in Upper Italy. In the downfall of the western empire, when everything that marked the existence of Italy as a nation had crumbled to pieces, and the land became by turns the prey of Hun and Saracen, Lombard, Frank, and German, the instinct of the people taught them to resort for safety, and at least comparative freedom, to the bond of citizenship, and to institutions which were more than a shadow of those of republican Rome. The open country was abandoned without resistance to the rule of the conquering races, who there established their chiefs as feudal lords, while the cities, even when their population had a large admixture of foreign blood, remained the unconquered strongholds of a spirit of independence, never quite extinguished, even in the worst times. But this spirit of independence reached only to the town

gates, or, in more prosperous times, to the boundaries of the territory of which it was master. The man of the nearest rival city was as much a stranger as the German emperor or Burgundian duke, and more hated because a neighbour. When the line of Otho the Great—he who had recognised and strengthened the municipal constitution of the cities of Upper Italy—was extinct, and the Diet of Pavia had elected Ardouin, who was at least half Italian, to be king of Lombardy, Milan, rather than allow Pavia, its rival, to dispose of the crown, invited the German emperor into Italy. A hundred and sixty years later, when Frederick Barbarossa had taken Milan, the centre of opposition to his rule, and resolved to raze it to the ground, it was not to the Slavonic or Saracen troops in his army that he committed the dreadful work. The task was readily undertaken, in requital for past wrongs, by the men of Como and Cremona, and the other adjoining cities, whose hatred the Milanese had provoked. If the same people afterwards adopted or acquiesced in the rule of the della Torres or the Viscontis, it was not because they were Italian, but because they were Milanese; and the loss of their own liberties was lightened by the importance to which their rulers attained and the influence they acquired throughout the rest of Italy. Save at Rome, in the policy of some of the popes, and in the writings of some of her great scholars and poets, there is no vestige of feeling or thought for Italy as a nation throughout her entire mediæval history.

The same period that marked the supremacy of the Italian race in science, literature, and art, was disgraced by a succession of political errors and crimes that exhausted the energies of the people, destroyed first their liberty, then their material prosperity, and left them an inheritance of servitude. Sismondi has fully pointed out, in the most interesting chapter of his great work, the broad distinction between modern ideas of liberty and those that animated the citizens of the Italian republics. He shows that in the best days of the republics civil liberty, comprehending protection to life and person, the security of property, the privilege of free speech, the impartial administration of justice, and the rights of conscience, were all alike as unprotected as under the rule of the most despotic sovereigns. Liberty, political liberty, as Sismondi defines it, implied the right of each citizen to a share in the government by contributing to the election of the officers of the republic, and the opportunity of influencing the destinies of his country in those frequent moments of crises when they were committed to the popular decision. But the historian of the republics scarcely re-

cognised the intimate union that exists between these two objects of the aspirations of mankind, or he would not have omitted to show how, throughout Italian history, the absence of all guarantee for individual rights helped towards the downfall of republican independence. Had such a barrier ever been firmly established, the excesses which led to the rise of local tyrannies might have been stopped short, and the nation could never have so tamely acquiesced in the loss of political existence.

Something, however, of the past has survived which even now may be the germ of revived national existence. Shorn, indeed, of their former importance, the municipal institutions have preserved something of the forms and some traces of the spirit of former days. Under the Venetian government the cities of *terra ferma*, though never allowed to participate in the government of the republic, yet retained their municipal administration, and an amount of local jurisdiction not very different from that which they now possess. In that worst period of national degradation, when the duchy of Milan passed under the rule of Spain, the municipalities were reduced to mere forms; but when, after the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, Austrian rule was established in the Milanese, the revival and extension of municipal privileges was one amongst the numerous reforms for which the country was indebted to Maria Theresa and her two successors. The organisation of local self-government in each *commune*,¹ definitively established in 1755, has continued to the present day with no important change, and is common to the provinces of Venice that have since passed under Austrian rule.

As the *commune* forms the basis of the existing political organisation of the country, we shall describe the way in which its administration is regulated, premising a few elementary statements relating to the political divisions of the territory.

Lombardy and Venice, although they form together but a single state of the monarchy, and are subject to the same laws and system of administration, are for most purposes kept completely distinct. Under a Viceroy residing alternately at Milan and at Venice, the chief civil authority is vested in the Lieutenant-Governor (*Luogotenente*) permanently established in each of those cities. Lombardy and Venice, or, in official language, the governments of Milan and Venice, are divided, the first into nine, the second into eight provinces, each presided over by a Delegate (*Delegato*) residing in the chief town of the

¹ The English word parish is scarcely an equivalent, as the largest cities, though containing many parishes, form but one *commune*. We adopt the French spelling as more common among English writers.

province. These in turn are subdivided into districts—each with a Commissary (*Commissario*) nearly equivalent to the French *sousprefet*—and the districts into *communes*, which vary greatly in extent and importance; the average in Lombardy being over 2,500 acres, in Venice considerably more.

According to the ordinary rule, every male inhabitant of full age, and the representatives of women or minors, being the owners of real property within the *commune*, are entitled to take part and to vote in the Assembly (*Convocato*), usually held twice in each year. The *Convocato*, from which none are excluded save men in the military service and the parochial clergy, and wherein no preponderance of votes is given in respect of property, is presided over by the *commissario* of the district, who is not permitted to take any part in the proceedings except to point out any illegality proposed, and to record the result of the debates. The chief business is to discuss the annual account of receipts and expenditure, and when vacancies arise to elect deputies. These are unpaid officers, three in number, and holding office for three years; the first being necessarily taken from the largest tax-payers in the *commune*. To them is confided the ordinary management of the affairs of the *commune*. They have the power to cause the arrest of criminals by the gendarmes or the revenue police, or by the local constables paid by each *commune*, but possess no further criminal jurisdiction. They appoint an Agent (*Agente Comunale*), who receives a yearly salary and carries out their orders. The other local officers—the doctors, schoolmasters, and midwives—are elected by the *Convocato* as vacancies arise. In the larger *communes*, however, where there are over 300 owners having a right to vote, the *Convocato* is superseded by a Council (*Consiglio Comunale*) consisting of thirty or more members,¹ of which number two-thirds at least must be owners of property, the other third being taken from the industrial or trading class resident in the *commune*. Non-resident proprietors are ineligible to sit in the council. This is renewed every three years, and the retiring councillors elect their own successors. All the proceedings of these bodies, and the selection of individuals for each of the above-named offices, are liable to the veto of the delegate of the province, but except in cases of positive illegality the government authorities very rarely interfere with the local bodies.

Cities have, in addition to their communal administration, a

¹ The proportion of *communes* having a Council instead of a *Convocato* is about one-fourth of the whole number in Lombardy, but in Venice considerably more than the half.

municipal organisation. In this the executive body consists of a Mayor (*Podestà*) and four Assessors (*Assessori*). The *Podestà*, who has considerable authority, and enjoys much more social consideration than the corresponding functionary in this country, is elected by the so-called municipal congregation. For this purpose the names of the three individuals who have had the largest number of votes are submitted to the Viceroy. The first name on the list is understood to have the preference, and is almost invariably selected by the higher authorities.

Intermediate between the local administration of each town or rural district and the central assemblies sitting in Venice and Milan, are provincial assemblies (*congregazioni provinciali*) meeting at the chief city of each province. The members of these very select bodies, usually five or six in number, are named, one for each city by the Town Council (*Consiglio Comunale*), and four for the province at large by the rural *communes*. For each seat to be filled up, a list of three names, or *terna*, consisting of those who have had the largest number of votes, is forwarded from each *commune* through the delegate to the lieutenant-governor at Venice or Milan. The person who, upon comparing all the lists, is found to have had the largest number of votes, unless a valid objection should be made by the provincial authorities, is considered duly elected.

The Provincial Assembly meets from time to time under the presidency of the delegate, who votes only when the members present are equally divided. Their chief duty is to give advice upon administrative questions arising in the province which have been specially referred to them for that purpose. They also possess the privilege of recording their opinion as to the merits and claims of the persons elected to represent the province in either of the central assemblies. Although the legal powers of the Provincial Assembly are thus limited, it exercises in practice the chief influence in deciding disputed questions of local administration. The government authorities probably find it convenient and safe to conform to the opinion of men of local knowledge and influence, who must bear their share of the odium attaching to any unpopular decision.

The nearest approach to representative government is, however, to be found in the Central Assemblies (*Congregazioni Centrali*) established by the Emperor Francis in 1815, suspended in 1848, and recalled to activity in 1857. They include one representative for each city, and two for each province, and meet respectively at Milan and Venice on two or three days in each month. They are selected by the sovereign from lists containing three names elected for each vacancy, accompanied

by the observations of the Provincial Assembly, and those of the lieutenant-governor or viceroy. It is not a matter of course to prefer the first name in each *terna* or list of three names. Public services, such as having acted gratuitously in a public office of trust—that of podestà for instance—are held to be a ground for preference; notorious opposition to the government would probably be a sufficient cause for rejection, but in practice we are disposed to believe that there has been a desire to secure the services of the most competent men, no person known to entertain strong anti-Austrian feelings having become a candidate.

The only legal privilege attaching to noble birth in Austrian Italy is that of having one of the two representatives of each province in the Central Assembly, and two out of the four members of the Provincial Assembly, selected from the class of nobles. In social life the barrier between that class and the rest of the community has not been completely broken down, and is perhaps more marked in Venice than in Lombardy. The traditions of a class who, till their fall, monopolised political power and social consideration are not speedily effaced; but in the Milanese the bourgeoisie, by the possession of great wealth and a large share of the landed property, have been enabled to rival, though not to eclipse the ancient noblesse.

Like the provincial bodies, the central assemblies are to a great extent advisers of the administration upon matters submitted to them by the lieutenant-governors of Milan and Venice, who, *virtute officii*, preside over their deliberations. But as these questions include all important measures intended to affect the Italian provinces, the range of their discussions is of necessity much wider, and their influence is, or ought to be, in proportion more felt. Some approach to the character of a parliament is to be found in the control which they exercise over the *fondo territoriale*, a portion of the public receipt and expenditure including a variety of charges incident to the territory which they represent. They cannot, indeed, resort to the *ultima ratio* of stopping the supplies; but they determine the amount and the distribution of a large portion of the local expenditure, besides exercising some restraint upon projects of new public works originating in the *communes*, which are examined and discussed, after a preliminary report from a member of the Assembly not connected with the locality. Every member is entitled to propose for deliberation in the Assembly any matter of public concern; and in their collective capacity these bodies have the right to communicate directly to the sovereign the wants and desires of the people. The lieutenant-governor,

however, in his capacity of President, is enabled to maintain a strict control over the proceedings, and no attempt could successfully be made to convert the proceedings of the Assembly into a means of systematic opposition to the government: on the other hand, the power vested in the Presidents has not of late been used to prevent the free discussion of questions of importance raised by individual members of the Assembly.

The members of the central assemblies hold their seats for six years, and receive a small annual payment of 200*l.*, which is considered to be no more than an equivalent for the cost of frequent journeys to the capital. In a country where moderate incomes are the rule, the want of such a provision would unduly restrict the choice of the electors.

However incomplete may be the measure of political liberty secured to the people of Venetian Lombardy, in regard either to local administration or national representation, it is mere ignorance or wilful misrepresentation, to talk in the same breath of the governments of Naples and Austrian Italy, as if they were similar either in their institutions or in the spirit with which these are administered. In the one country the arbitrary excesses of a corrupt police supersede all law, and justice is powerless against political favour or pecuniary bribes; in the other, the ordinary administration of the law is free from any suspicion of corruption, the agents of authority are carefully watched, and there is no disposition shown to shelter abuse.¹ The political institutions, if they fall very far short of what we should desire for the people of Italy, are in many respects more liberal than those of France, and far more so than those of the other states of the peninsula, with the single exception of Piedmont. An impartial observer of the history of the past ten years is, indeed, tempted to swerve to the side of the Austrian government by the gross injustice of the epithets 'butcher,' 'tyrant,' 'oppressor,' and the like, which are daily applied to it, until the British public has come to suppose that there can be no doubt of their truth. It is no more than simple justice to the memory of a distinguished man to say, that no ruler in similar circumstances ever displayed greater moderation than did the late Marshal Radetzky, when victory had re-established the

¹ In the month of September last the present Viceroy, the Archduke Ferdinand Maximilian, published a remarkable circular addressed to all the employés under his control, in which the duties of those who, as he expressed it, 'are not the masters but the servants of the public,' are pointed out with great clearness, and in a spirit very opposite to that commonly attributed to Austrian officials.

power of Austria, and the Emperor placed in his hands all but absolute control over his Italian subjects. Though it is true that there is a strong party in Austria who are the bigoted opponents of all change, it is notorious that the most influential of the Emperor's advisers are men well disposed to a gradual, though cautious, advance in the direction of liberal institutions. To this school the present Viceroy of Venetian Lombardy appears to belong. Among other tokens of improvement, the entire removal of all the vexations connected with passports deserves to be remembered. Still better, as contrary to the usual timidity of all continental governments, which dread opposition as if fraught with mortal danger, the Archduke Ferdinand Maximilian has shown repeated evidence of his desire to give full opportunity to all, even notorious opponents of his government, to take a share in public affairs. Contrary to general expectation, the selection of a gentleman of ability, known as a decided liberal, for the important office of Podestà of Venice, was sanctioned by the government. M. Gasparrini, a distinguished man of science, forced to quit Naples for his political opinions, was offered and accepted a professorship at Pavia. In inquiries into several branches of the administration connected with projected reforms, the assistance of able men, even though known as prominent liberals, has been requested.

But these are mere indications of a disposition towards reform; and in the mean time the Italians have many positive and serious grievances to complain of at the hands of their rulers, and these are still unredressed.

Foremost of all is the intolerable amount of direct taxation which has pressed on the Italian provinces since 1849. The subject, which is too long and intricate for detailed examination here, is very ably discussed in the pamphlet whose title is prefixed to this article. The writer, M. Valentino Pasini, one of the ablest lawyers in Venice, and brother to the eminent geologist of the same name, has to our judgment fully established his main proposition, that the proportion of direct taxation at present imposed on the provinces of Venetian Lombardy is very considerably higher than what is exacted from the other portions of the empire. This disproportion existed before 1849, as it does at present; but it has been more heavily felt, since in that year the necessities of the state led to an addition of one-third to the previous amount of direct taxation. This, which already in Italy amounted to more than 28 per cent. on the annual value as determined by government survey, became 38 per cent. since 1849. It is hard to say what portion of the rental of landed property this really represents. In a

country where the *mezzeria* system prevails, the income of proprietors fluctuates as much as the profits of the farmer. We are inclined to think, however, that the present tax amounts to about 25 per cent. upon the ordinary receipts of the owners of land. This impost presses still more heavily on the peasant proprietors of the mountain region, for a reason which has not been pointed out either by M. Pasini or by M. Jacini, who have both written so well on this subject. In all the established modes of estimating the net annual value of land for purposes of taxation, it is tacitly assumed that if a proprietor lets his land the tenant will feed himself and his family before he will pay rent, or if the owner employs labourers, that he must provide for their subsistence before he derives any profit from the land; in either case the valuation deals with what remains after the actual tillers of the soil have been supported, according to the local standard of comfort. But when valuers find themselves in a district of small peasant proprietors, each of them cultivating his own small plot of ground, they forget that the same principle holds good. The subsistence of the cultivator and his family is the first charge on the land, and not a portion of the profits of ownership, and the valuator has nothing to operate upon until that and other necessary expenditure has been provided for out of the produce of the soil. This distinction is the more necessary, as the economical theory of rent fails in its application to these cases. The native of a mountain country, returning to the place of his birth, will often pay a rent or give a price for land out of all proportion to its value, simply to gratify an instinctive feeling stronger than all calculations of profit and loss. We feel no doubt but that the present amount of taxation in some of the mountain valleys trenches on the bare sustenance of the people; while, in regard to the mass of the proprietors, it restricts so far their available means as to oppose a very serious bar to the progress of agricultural improvement, besides limiting the consumption of taxable commodities.

Closely connected with the main grievance to which we have just adverted, is another arising out of the law imposing a tax on the transmission of real property, whether by way of sale, gift, or inheritance.

All economists are agreed in condemning taxes upon the transfer of property for valuable consideration: a succession duty rests upon quite different grounds, and is one of the least objectionable of all taxes; but the special grievance of which the Italian subjects of Austria have to complain is not the nature of the tax, which is uniform throughout the empire, but

the mode in which it is assessed. The value of the property which is the subject of transfer is determined by reference, not to the annual value as registered in the government surveys, but is declared to be one hundred times the amount of annual tax payable on account of the same property. If the land-tax bore a constant proportion to the rated value of property throughout the empire, it would be indifferent which standard was referred to; but if it be true, as appears unquestionable, that the Italian provinces pay a much higher per-centage of tax than the rest of the monarchy, the effect of the rule above mentioned is to aggravate that wrong by creating the same disproportion in the assessment of another tax,¹ and that one which is open to grave objection as interfering with the sale and acquisition of landed property. Fiscal injustice is, however, unhappily one of the commonest incidents to all systems of government. In our own legislation, we have not so long entered upon the paths of righteousness that we should upbraid bitterly the sinner not yet converted. Nor can it be alleged that the Austrian government has shown itself insensible to the complaints of its Italian subjects. A commission has been appointed to inquire into the mode in which the existing valuation was effected, and to examine into the alleged inequality between the direct taxation of Venetian Lombardy and that of the rest of the empire. It may be true, as has been alleged by the enemies of Austria, that the inquiry will be illusory, and that there is no real intention of doing justice; but if this be so, it is hard to account for the policy that has authorised the Central Assemblies at Milan and Venice each of them to select two members who are included in that commission.

It is strange to find that at a time when the country resounds with just complaints of the excessive taxation laid upon it by a foreign government, local rates, self-imposed by the *communes*, should have been largely increased, sometimes equalling, or even exceeding, the amount of government taxation. The very freedom which is enjoyed for purposes of local administration is often favourable to jobbing, the congenital disease of free representative institutions. New roads, bridges, churches, and works

¹ An illustration will make this point more clear. A piece of land worth 100*l.* a year will be valued in the government survey, or census, at about 66*l.* a year. The direct tax on this, if it be situated in Venetian Lombardy, is 25*l.* a year, if elsewhere, the tax at the rate of 21½ per cent. on the valuation will be under 14*l.* a year. Supposing the property sold, it is liable to pay 3½ per cent. on the gross value, and this is declared to be a hundred times the annual tax. Hence, an Italian proprietor would lose 87*l.* 10*s.* out of the purchase money, when the same transaction elsewhere would be charged with a payment of no more than 48*l.* 10*s.*

of ornament quite beyond their available means are executed by small village communities where the management is in the hands of men who pay but a trifling tax for a small plot of land or a single house, while the chief proprietors, if not actually resident within the *commune*, are ineligible to sit on the council that virtually disposes of their property. It is understood that the central assemblies have had before them a measure for the reform of the communal system, wherein it is to be desired that, without disturbing the main principles of the law of 1755, some further protection should be afforded to property against ill-considered and extravagant expenditure. At present the only check, and that an occasional and insufficient one, is the veto which the government authorities, on the advice of the provincial or central assemblies, sometimes interposes. On the other hand the principle of popular election, preserved in the *Convocato*, should be extended to those larger *communes* that are administered by a council.

To give greater spirit and activity to the proceedings of the central assemblies, and to secure for them a larger share of public confidence, the first condition should be the publicity of their proceedings. We are persuaded that this change would be both safe and politic on the part of the government; though it can scarcely be said to be demanded by public opinion, which at present takes little note of the existence of bodies who give no open sign of useful activity.

Another reform, the importance of which was long since pointed out by Sismondi, would be complete publicity in the administration of criminal justice. That eminent writer justly attributed a large share of that innate hostility to the law, and that hatred and contempt for its ministers, which have for centuries been characteristic of the Italian people, to the secrecy which has always attended the proceedings of the criminal tribunals. If it be true that among a people with lively imaginations, this tends to increase the terrors of the law, in an exactly equal degree it gives strength to popular impressions of cruelty and injustice. From the best information that we have been able to obtain, our belief is, that the criminal law in Venetian Lombardy is both justly and mildly administered. The feeling among the people is, even now, less averse to the law than in middle or southern Italy, and the government would have much to gain and little to lose by a change which would increase confidence and diminish those vague alarms that often run through the public mind.

The censure on the press is still maintained, but diminished in severity under the administration of the present Viceroy.

The books to which we have referred in the course of this article show that the full discussion of alleged grievances in language temperate but firm, is not prohibited by the existing administration. The first evil of a restricted press is, however, the uncertainty that must necessarily mark its action. No two men invested with the power to tie up another man's voice or pen will agree as to the exact point at which it may be prudent or safe to apply the gag. The history of Europe, however, shows that the liberty of the press is the form of freedom most difficult to gain and most difficult to use wisely when gained. None but strong governments believe that they can exist in safety along with a free press; and it would be vain to look for such a token of vigorous health in the present condition of the Austrian government.

When we have thus touched upon the more salient defects in existing institutions of Venetian Lombardy, we should add, that there is an increasing desire on the part of the educated classes for representative institutions, which shall be more than the shadow of parliamentary government. The example of Piedmont has, no doubt, contributed largely to this feeling, which is, however, partly balanced by the apprehensions prevailing among many of the landed proprietors, who dread, far more than Austrian rule, the ascendancy of the democratic party that look to Mazzini as their leader; and who, having destroyed the cause of Italian liberty in 1848, have ever since continued to be the chief supporters of Austrian influence throughout the peninsula.

Our readers will not have failed to observe, that both the fiscal grievances, and the desire for political reforms, which we have pointed out as just causes for dissatisfaction among the wealthy and educated classes in Venetian Lombardy, do not in the least affect the mass of the rural population. In the mountain districts, and in some portions of Lombardy, landed property is extremely subdivided: there the peasant proprietors feel their share of taxation; but throughout the greater part of the territory, the mass of the rural population is quite unconscious of the evils that are acutely felt by the classes above them. It is said that two recent measures of the government—the alteration of the currency, and a change in the conscription law—have aroused universal discontent amongst this portion of the population. We have no faith in this assurance. The fact that any alarm should have been felt on the subject is a sign of weakness in the government, but it is idle to suppose that a change in the current coin will drive a people to revolt. Like all agricultural people the peasantry are averse to change,

and in spite of the efforts of succeeding governments they have retained an incredible number of local weights and measures;¹ but people very soon learn to use the coin which is current as legal tender, and after a few months they scarcely remember the inconvenience of which they complained so loudly. More serious, perhaps, was the discontent caused by a change recently introduced in the law of conscription for military service—not for the Italian provinces alone, but for the entire empire—whereby the exemption hitherto granted to only sons was withdrawn except in specified cases, as where the mother is a widow. If we considered only abstract principles we should be disposed to approve of this change. Every exemption, while it takes something off the shoulders of one man, increases the burden on another. But laws which intimately affect the relations between the people and the state, and the domestic feelings of all classes, should not lightly be touched. The new law seems to have been an ill-considered innovation, and we learn that its operation has been suspended, if not completely set aside.

Speaking from our own knowledge of the Lombard and Venetian peasantry, we entirely disbelieve in the existence amongst them of any general feeling of disaffection to the government. We have heard them express discontent with the upper class (the '*signori*'), whom they accuse of want of consideration for the poor, and we have as often found them speak of the government as a power disposed to befriend and protect them. In 1848, the peasantry in the plains very often remained neutral and refused assistance to the Piedmontese army; and we have been assured by many who had themselves borne arms against Austria in the war, that they have since regretted the part they then took, and that nothing could induce them to fight again against a government that had never done them any harm.

The cause of this feeling it is not hard to discover, although it is scarcely ever recognised by English writers: it is the same cause that amidst difficulties of every description has given strength and permanence to the Austrian government. Not, assuredly, through diplomatic skill, or through standing armies, has that empire been upheld throughout successive periods of distress and disaster, but through the fact that her statesmen have constantly and resolutely directed their policy to secure the well-being of the mass of the rural population in the various

¹ A volume of nearly 300 pages is used by men of business to enable them to transact their affairs in the various rates prevailing in different parts of Venetian Lombardy. If we recollect aright, there are no less than forty-three different scales of weights and measures still current.

countries that compose her territory. For many grievous faults she has suffered and will suffer more, but to this redeeming virtue in her career she owes it that she still continues to exist. Let us but think for a moment of the condition of one of these peasants. He is free from taxation, except what he pays on tobacco and salt; justice, when he has a dispute with his neighbour or his landlord, is cheaply obtained, and administered without favour to the rich; medical attendance is provided gratuitously for himself and his family; a school is open to his children; finally, if he saves money enough to buy a plot of land, he becomes a member of the *convocato* of his village, and can give his vote as well as the richest gentleman of the neighbourhood. The liability to serve in the army is the only real tax that he pays to the state in return for these advantages: to this he is familiarised, and he has not before him the example of any country in which that burden is unknown. What room for wonder is there that such a man is not disaffected to the ruling powers?

Very different must be our report of the feelings of the rest of the nation. If we go through the entire population of the principal cities, we shall find, with merely trifling exceptions, a perfectly unanimous feeling of discontent, and a rooted hostility to the existing government. Most conspicuous among the professional classes, it descends through every portion of the bourgeoisie. Among the landed proprietors the sentiment is less strong and less unanimous, yet we have no doubt but that the great majority share in the same feelings, and that these are in a great degree common to the parochial clergy, whatever reserve they may usually impose upon their language and demeanour.

Are we to believe that all this arises from over-taxation, or from the want of free political institutions? There can be no more complete delusion. It is not forgotten that under the kingdom of Italy the budget rose to 146,000,000 of francs, and the conscription to 15,000 men a year, and that 40,000 men, from that portion of Italy alone, were sent to die in the Russian campaign. The people do not delude themselves by supposing that a revolutionary struggle will relieve them from taxation. Nor is the zeal for free institutions very strong except amongst a minority of the educated classes.

If the Austrian government were to grant to-morrow every reasonable demand of its Italian subjects, a few men of a practical disposition might be satisfied, but the mass of those who now hate their rulers would hate them still. All their grievances are trifling to them compared to this one—that they are *ruled by strangers*. They see the chief places in their administration

filled by Austrian officials, their strong places occupied by German and Hungarian soldiery, the seat of empire removed beyond the Alps, and their country no more than a dependency of a foreign power: these are things compared to which relief from taxation or constitutional privileges are unimportant in their eyes. This, then, is the position of affairs—a government not ill disposed to do justice, but afraid of any reform that would give strength to its subjects—a people whom no concession can appease, and who desire but one thing of their governors—that they take themselves away from the face of the land. Let not any one imagine that upon this issue our verdict is against the people, or that we think they can be sufficiently answered by saying that their grievance is a mere matter of feeling. Feeling is the strongest thing in this world, and will carry men further than either their reason or their interest; he is therefore no true statesman that omits it from his calculations. The misfortune of the Italians has been that such feelings have not more constantly and intensely moved them. Let us not forget that they are a people who have inherited an ancient civilisation, whose leaders are sprung from families than whom none are more illustrious in Europe, whose cities preserve in their municipalities traditions and associations that reach up to the dawn of modern history; who have, indeed, throughout their past career wanted that spirit of union that would have bound scattered communities into a nation, but whose past renown for arts and arms, whose wealth and industry, and varied achievements in science and literature, all entitle them to claim an independent existence. With an equal disregard for abstract right and sound policy, after twenty years of war had taught Europe to submit everything to the rule of the strongest, the allied sovereigns in 1814 placed over this people a government that had grown up amidst another and utterly discordant civilisation, and a dynasty remarkable for eminent personal qualities beyond any other reigning family of Europe, but seated on a throne that for centuries has been the object of Italian hatred. Every effort to maintain the rule of the stranger, and to reconcile the people to his presence, seems to be doomed beforehand to disappointment. The character of the two races, even their good qualities, are so opposed and contrasted, that it is impossible that the one should consent to recognise the domination of the other.

If we be asked whether time, aided by wise policy on the part of the rulers, is strong enough to soften this antagonism of races, and to enable the Italians to live harmoniously within the bounds of the Austrian empire, we must answer, however doubt-

ingly, in the negative. Milan, that except for seventy years after the peace of Constance never enjoyed independence, that owes to Austrian rule the best and most liberal government that it ever possessed—from the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle till the French Revolution—is at this day more hostile to that government than the Venetians who have had a shorter experience of it.

The unanswerable argument against the continuance of Austrian rule is to be found, not in the groundless accusation that the government is wilfully unjust or oppressive, but in the fact that it is not, or does not feel itself to be, strong enough to adopt those measures by which alone the contentment of its subjects could be secured. A more liberal system of administration, which should combine with the removal of financial grievances some extension of representative institutions, and the gradual substitution of Italian for German officials, might change the feelings of the people of Venetian Lombardy, but there is no denying that they would be accompanied by serious risk. The cabinet of Vienna dares not consent to the experiment, and in that fact rests its condemnation.

Where, then, is the outlet from this difficulty? If the desires of the Italian people are just, how are they to be realised? Shall it be by war? Piedmont is ready and eager for the fight. The French Emperor, whose ultimate designs remain concealed, is still preparing for the contest. We rejoice that the British nation through all its accustomed organs, the daily press, the irregular utterances of public meetings, and finally, by the deliberate voice of all her leading statesmen in Parliament, should have declared for peace, and judgment upon the circumstance that England and France have been to be parties to those treaties that give Austria her claim to her Italian provinces. Though the case were otherwise, we should equally hold that the intervention of a foreign army in the dire controversy between the people of those provinces and their rulers, would be merely to inflict upon them the miseries of war, with a certain prospect of either aggravating existing evils, or of substituting one foreign domination for another. M. Felix Clormain, who reprobates so indignantly the past ingratitude of the Italian people for not cherishing the memory of the man who first attacked Venice, and then betrayed it to Austria, trampled under foot the independence of Genoa, and murdered afar the wealth and blood of both in gigantic schemes of aggression, will doubtless be surprised to learn that the general feeling of the ablest men among the patriotic party

in Venetian Lombardy is decidedly opposed to French intervention. We cling to the hope that the not doubtful expression of English opinion, the well-known feelings of Germany, but chiefly the open reluctance of France itself, and the remonstrances of all his most attached followers, may prevail with Louis Napoleon against the motives that prompt an obstinate adherence to a long-meditated project, and the reckless impetuosity of a relative who knows neither principle nor scruple.

In the uncertainty that still exists—the die may be cast before these words are in print—there is one aspect of the question which deserves attention. It seems to be taken for granted, not only in London and Paris, but also in Turin, that if Austria and France were only out of the way, the Italian question, so far as the North is concerned, would be settled at once by the spontaneous union of the entire country, from the Alps to the Adriatic, under the sceptre of the House of Savoy. This, we are well persuaded, is a complete error. We are aware that the number of persons in Venetian Lombardy, who, as an alternative to Austrian rule, would consent to the union with Piedmont, has increased and is increasing; but those who know how strong is the repugnance to such a union, and how many local feelings and jealousies intervene, must be convinced that the formal completion of such an arrangement would be the signal for new difficulties and discords that would grievously imperil the new-found liberty of the only constitutional state in the south of Europe. Neither Milan nor Venice would ever willingly submit to descend to the rank of provincial towns governed from Turin; while the transfer of the seat of government to either of those cities would cause deep dissatisfaction to the ancient and attached subjects of the House of Savoy. Whatever might be the fate of the reigning family, the destiny of the Piedmontese constitution would not long be doubtful if the throne were established among a people who feel to it no steady allegiance. Even at this time its maintenance has been due chiefly to the personal attachment of the people to the king, and their confidence in his chief minister: the tree is not yet vigorous enough to bear transplanting. To account for the present policy of Piedmont we are bound to believe that the able minister who directs it has had the calmness of his judgment shaken by the various impulses and temptations that have recently beset him. Italian patriotism, and an honourable ambition to achieve greatness for Piedmont, have kept his eyes riveted on the further bank of the Tessin: political refugees, eager to believe what they desire, ply him with solicitations and incitements to commence the war of liberation; and he

has been egged on by a powerful but suspicious ally whom it is dangerous to oppose, but still more dangerous to confide in. Count Cavour should know that there is no man so ill situated as himself to learn the true condition of Venetian Lombardy. Every one who approaches him is impelled either by his position or by personal interest to show that country through coloured glasses. To one who stands aloof from the passions that agitate Turin, the course marked out for Piedmont seems clear. The peaceful development of her own institutions, the promotion of industry and national wealth, a wise management of the finances, and consequent reduction of the public burdens—these will every year make Piedmont more and more envied and respected by the people of the rest of Italy; and if Austria should persevere in the simply repressive course of policy that seems again to be coming into favour at Vienna, the ultimate union of her present territory with Piedmont will probably arrive, and under circumstances more favourable to the future stability of the new state than can be anticipated now.

Whether or not Austria will persevere in the hopeless attempt to keep firm possession of her Italian provinces, while failing to conciliate the good will of the people, is more than we can decide. It is the instinct of all rulers to cling to power until it is forced from their grasp. Disaffection on the part of subjects has sometimes been met by stern correctives, sometimes by wise remedies; but it has never sufficed to lead to a voluntary renunciation of sovereignty. Yet at a time when so many new elements have entered into the problems that statesmen have to solve, it would be unwise to conclude from the past what must happen in the future. The Emperor of Austria and his advisers must perforce reflect seriously on the difficulties of every kind that arise from their present position in Italy. Two forces, little felt in former times, now exercise a preponderating influence in political affairs—Public opinion, and Finance. Vague and subtle, impossible to seize or accurately to define, opinion is daily more potent, even against the masters of legions. Opposed to them it spreads doubt and feebleness through their councils, and unnerves the arms of their stoutest instruments. The court of Vienna is aware that, in respect to Italy, she has the public opinion of Europe against her, and that in every unexpected turn of political events her position there is an ever-present source of danger. But if it were possible to forget this, there is a still more urgent motive that it is impossible to neglect. Financial difficulties have been long an increasing source of embarrassment to Austria. The continued hope that the wealth of Lombardy and Venice would

some day or other compensate for the enormous expense that their retention entails on the state has been continually disappointed. But while taxation has increased to its utmost limit, the burden of garrisoning a country that in time of peace requires a war establishment, and war expenditure, is every year more and more exhausting the resources of the state. We have failed to obtain any reliable estimate of the receipt and expenditure, direct and indirect, of Venetian Lombardy; but we are persuaded that the Austrian Minister of Finance is painfully aware of the true state of that account. Beyond the difficulty and cost of simply holding the country, the risk of foreign war that it entails is a further and formidable cause of financial difficulty.

There is, then, no lack of motives that should induce a wise Austrian statesman to reflect seriously on the propriety of maintaining the present condition of things. But it is equally clear that there is an alternative for Austria worse than that of retaining Italy, with all its attendant danger and ruinous expenditure, and that would be the establishment on the undefended southwestern frontier of the empire of a powerful hostile state, or of one which should be the mere tool of a formidable and unfriendly rival. This would be merely to exchange one peril for another, with the continued need of heavy military expenditure, and the loss of her most fertile sources of revenue. To avert such a calamity, the united force of the entire Austrian empire would contend to the uttermost, and against every odds; and it is now sufficiently well known that the other states of Germany would join her in resisting any attempt by France to accomplish that object. It is not strange that under these circumstances the people of Venetian Lombardy, without abating one jot of their aversion to Austrian rule, should shrink from the prospect of a war whose worst miseries would be borne by themselves, and whose issue would be so uncertain; nor that England, without being justly chargeable with indifference to Italian freedom, should discountenance the project of setting the world on fire in order to give Milan and Venice a change of masters.

It is impossible to avoid coming to the conclusion, that the voluntary retirement of 'the stranger' is the only settlement that contains within it the sure promise of peace for Italy. It is only as an Italian kingdom that Venetian Lombardy will be prosperous and contented. It may be wise, for the sake of retaining Austria's good will and baffling the schemes of France, to place on the throne one of the younger branches of the imperial family of Austria. But that throne must be exclusively surrounded by Italians and Italian institutions, and every

Austrian soldier must be withdrawn beyond the Alps and the Isonzo. That such an arrangement would be better for the real interests of Italy than any which could be established by French bayonets, we do not think it necessary to prove; but though we know it will not readily be believed, we add the further assertion, that it would be more satisfactory to the people of Venetian Lombardy than union with Piedmont. We cannot say what effect the recent agitation in Milan may have produced in that quarter, but we are convinced that a few months ago a decided preponderance of opinion would have declared itself for such a project. We see no serious disadvantage in the fact that the new state would be small and relatively weak. For military purposes the whole of Upper Italy must be weak as compared with France or Austria. If Italy is ever to be strong it must be by federation, and not by union under a single government; and a desire to fashion states according to a particular pattern is a feeling that deserves no place when it comes into collision with the feelings and natural character of the people.

To the Austrian emperor the plan which we advocate has many and obvious recommendations. It would protect, instead of threatening, his most exposed frontier, and would avoid the humiliation that will attend any other mode of abandoning his present position. He will find in the history of his family more than one precedent. The establishment of a younger branch of the house of Lorraine in Tuscany, which formed part of the arrangements at the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, secured to that state during the greater part of the succeeding century the best government to be found in any part of the peninsula.

Though such is probably not the opinion of the present emperor, there can be little doubt that the circumstances that have led Austria to interfere so constantly in the political concerns of all the Italian states have detracted from her real weight in the general councils of Europe. She has been forced to become the accomplice of much that she secretly condemned, and has been justly held responsible for the misdeeds of governments upon whom she has exercised an apparent, if not an effectual, control. Worse than all, the direction given to her diplomacy abroad has reacted most mischievously on her home policy. Austrian statesmanship has got to be regarded as the inevitable opponent to all political progress. Europe has almost forgotten the earlier and better days of a dynasty that was the first in Europe to establish religious equality amongst its subjects—at a time when in England the Roman Catholic and the Protestant dissenter were excluded from every office of trust—that emancipated the peasants from feudal oppression and es-

tablished a system of national education, when in France the wrongs and the ignorance of the people were fast preparing them for the ferocities and follies of 1793. Neither the present nor any other Austrian emperor can be expected to revert to the better traditions of his house, and show himself worthy to succeed to the crown of Maria Theresa and of Leopold, so long as he finds it his first and most necessary occupation to keep down the discontent of millions of his own subjects, and to watch lest they catch the infectious breath of liberty from neighbours of the same blood and language as themselves.

No foreigner would be much concerned in the choice of that member of the imperial family who should be placed at the head of the new state. One there is to whom the feelings of the Italian subjects of Austria would certainly give a preference—the present Viceroy Ferdinand Maximilian. During the short time he has been engaged in the impossible task of striving to reconcile the people to their present position, this young prince has displayed remarkable ability; and if we may trust to appearances, he is a man of liberal principles, who would honestly devote himself to the difficult but glorious enterprise of converting an unhappy and disaffected dependency into a free, prosperous, and friendly neighbour.

If this be but a dream, if Austria on the one hand, France and Piedmont on the other, be committed in a controversy that leaves no other arbiter than the sword, the friends of Italy and of civilisation may well veil their faces, for the spectacle will be a grievous one. Of the wide-spread miseries of war the cruellest portion will fall upon the unfortunate people of Italy, and chiefly upon those of Venetian Lombardy. They may learn to curse the industry that has enriched their plains, the arts that have adorned their cities, the beauty that heaven has lavished on their land, if all these have served but as baits to tempt the vultures; if twice in the nineteenth century of Christianity they are to be the prey for contending foreigners, and the world has still no tribunal strong enough to protect the weak, to hold back the aggressor, and to teach justice to the ruler.

BENTLEY'S

QUARTERLY REVIEW.

THE FACTION-FIGHTS.

WE humbly subscribe to all the ordinary commonplaces on the subject of Parliamentary Government. We look upon the British Constitution as always, and in all its phases, the best the world can possibly produce. We profess the most unbounded veneration for the system of government by parties, and concur in the orthodox belief that two sets of gentlemen squabbling for place are the only sure bulwark of our freedom. We do not undervalue the services of the 654 hard-working men, who for six months in every year exhibit such amazing energy in doing nothing. But we cannot repress a natural, though perhaps culpable regret, that this should be now the third session that has been devoted almost entirely to the settlement of the interesting question, whether Lord Palmerston is or is not a more important man than Lord John Russell. Parliament does not give itself up to these personal questions from want of anything better to do. There is no lack of important subjects in which spare parliamentary energy might find a vent. The English law is burdened with anomalies, and clogged with a rusty and obsolete machinery to an extent paralleled by no nation on the earth. There is many a municipal and parochial institution that has outlived its age and calls for a vigorous though careful reform. But we spend our time, year after year, not in discussing the difficulties which all such questions must involve, but in disputing who is the man that shall form the Cabinet, that shall draw the bill, that shall create the constituencies, that shall elect the Parliament, that shall, in due time, enact the improvements that are immediately and urgently required. We have not as yet got beyond the first stage of this new version of 'the house that Jack built;' and if we linger as

long over every stage as we have lingered over the first, it is to be feared that the New Zealander on the broken arch of London Bridge will make his appearance before we have done. As, however, everything that interests our remote posterity must of necessity also be interesting to us, it may be worth while to consider the faction-fights of the last four months, and see how much way we have made in the preliminary steps of this very slow but very methodical plan of legislation.

If there was ever an undisputed axiom in modern political science, it used to be that party government was effete. People might view the event with different eyes, and draw from it different conclusions; it was Lord Stanley's reason for not resigning office, and Mr. Sidney Herbert's reason for not desiring it; but all men were agreed as to the fact, that the system which was set up in the days of William III. to give unity and consistency to parliamentary government was tottering to its fall. One genuine factious struggle has sufficed to dissipate that dream. The misfortune is, that party is not dead but only dying. Its life and its bloom are withered, but its unwieldy trunk still cumpers the ground. For all purposes of practical usefulness it is paralyzed, but it still remains strong enough in the *vis inertiae* of mere obstruction to hinder any healthier system from coming into play. Pure party government is becoming impracticable, because the House of Commons no longer consists exclusively of partisans; but the change is too recent to have destroyed the machinery by which that system was worked. If by any contrivance a perfectly independent government could be carried on for ten or a dozen years, parties would necessarily die of inanition. In these days, when they no longer represent a substantial divergence of opinions, the only cement by which their coherence is maintained is power, actual or prospective. If a few years' experience could teach the youthful aspirant that party fidelity was no path to office, he would soon learn to have opinions of his own. If the staunch politician were once to satisfy himself that his own views on any one question would not be advanced by supporting his leader on another, and that he would gain nothing by voting against his conscience, he would soon give up performing that typical act of party loyalty. But until actual experience has instilled this belief into a new generation of politicians, parties are not likely to disappear. They are likely to go on subsisting as they do now in a numbed and enfeebled condition, shorn of their numbers, lax in their discipline, distrustful of their leaders, too few and too apathetic to give power to a government, too numerous and too faithful to traditional jealousies to tolerate a thoroughly independent

administration. As matters now are, the House of Commons may be defined as consisting of two parties and a mob. The two parties are animated by the single-minded desire of holding office at the cost of as few pledges and as scanty concessions to democratic importunity as may suffice for the attainment of that disinterested aim. It is not that either party is wholly composed of selfish or ambitious men; but, so far as it is a party, it has surrendered its conduct into its leader's hands; and the leaders must be of a mettle unknown in this degenerate age, if they have the courage, for the sake of a principle, to mortify their own longings or disregard the gaunt pleadings of their hungry myrmidons. But the mob is in a condition of chronic opposition, of hopeless political famine. The mass of its members—Mr. Gibson's example notwithstanding—know that for some time to come they have little chance of office, and that if they vote against their pledges, there are no party rewards in reserve to comfort them for their probable ejection from the House of Commons. Having no immediate interests to serve except the preservation of their seats, they arrogate to themselves the title of independent members. Probably their motives are not less selfish nor their political principles stronger than those of the humblest slave of Brooks's or the Carlton. But they obey constituencies while the partisans are obeying leaders; and in the present state of political morality the constituencies are the nobler guides of the two. The more extreme constituencies have some conviction or some crotchet, which they sincerely cherish, and which they press their member to support: but there seems to be no principle in the political vocabulary, no past pledge to followers or to the world, which the three or four leaders seem to think too precious to be offered up before the golden image they have set up in Downing Street. The consequences are as strange as they are melancholy. The standard of character, as between the various sections of the House of Commons, seems to be inverted. Those whose education, and social position, and known character, should be a pledge for their honourable conduct, are seen, under the lash of the party whip, to be pursuing in the aggregate a policy, which each one in his own mind laments as factious and dirty and crooked: while the only men who appear to be guided by pure principle, and who disdain to creep into office by dark and circuitous paths, are the adventurers to whom Parliament is a professional advertisement. The result of the present semi-animate condition of the old party system is, that the Radical attorney is holding a straightforward course, while the honest country gentleman is eternally manœuvring. Party spirit is not strong enough

to place a minister in that position of eminence that he can afford to dispense with intrigues, and boldly state and act up to his own views; but it is strong enough to make masses of honourable men accomplices in a strategy of low finesse.

But this is not the worst of the results produced by this twilight existence, by this long transition-period of lingering decay. The character of the House of Commons may suffer, and in future years that character may be redeemed; but the constitution is being hurried down paths along which its steps can never be retraced. The battle is all too unequal between Democrats on the one side who care only for principle, and Constitutionalists on the other who care only for place. 'Give us concessions,' say the Radicals, 'and you may keep your places as long as you like.' 'Give us our places,' say Mr. Disraeli and Lord John Russell with a single breath, 'and we will squeeze for you what concessions we can out of our reluctant followers.' The bargain is made, the places are gained; and the surviving allegiance of the two great parties is taxed to enable their leaders to fulfil it. All that remains of the party tie is strained to pull obstinate Constitutionalists along the democratic road in which their leaders find it more remunerative to travel. On the Radical side it is the constituency that forces the member, and the member that puts the screw upon the leader. On the Whig and Conservative side, it is the leader who cajoles the member into making concessions to which his constituents are with difficulty reconciled.

These sinister tactics underlay the strategy, and discredited the character of the recent parliamentary tournament, which, from a merely intellectual point of view, was not unworthy to compare with the tilts of other days. Throughout it the Radicals sat in the position of the Queen of Beauty, before whose eyes the contending rivals vied with each other to prove, not only the prowess of their arms, but the abjectness of their devotion. Each ate dirt to show his love. One ate his objections to the 10% county franchise; another, his scruples in regard to a reduced borough franchise; while two others were content to swallow modified opinions on the ballot. Each submitted to ride with the device of a rat upon his shield. Mr. Disraeli took the rat suppliant, Lord John Russell blazoned the rat rampant, and Sir James Graham bore, as he had borne before, the rat *gardant sejant*—that is, the rat that looks to keep his seat. On whom would the Queen of Beauty deign to look with favour? Whose brows would she crown with the coveted wreath of office? But the conduct of the leaders was not the most surprising part of this strange competition. That they should have bid high

against each other for Radical support was only a continuation of the policy that has been pursued ever since, with Protection, true party division disappeared. It is the complicity of the followers in this suicidal auction which displays the disastrous tenacity of the party tie long after its beneficial power has passed away.

When Mr. Disraeli gave notice that on the last day of February he should bring forward his Reform Bill, there was no mistaking the feeling which animated the vast majority of the House of Commons. They felt that the unscrupulous ambition of public men had pledged them to a Reform Bill, which was neither called for by the practical necessities of the country nor desired by the nation at large. But promises had been given which must be redeemed, and hopes had been excited which it might be dangerous to disappoint. The only thing was to fulfil the pledge with as little damage as need be to the existing balance of power. There were places that might be enfranchised without approaching to electoral districts, or centering all political power in the valleys that drain into the Mersey and the Humber. There were classes that might be admitted to the polling-booth without swamping property by numbers, or giving to the many that do not pay the right to tax the few that do. The least possible amount of change that would satisfy the expectations which had been raised, was obviously the measure that would have been most popular with the House of Commons as it was in February last. The dominant wish among Liberals and Conservatives alike was to suppress Mr. Bright. So thoroughly did he feel that the House was against him, that when he spoke it was in language obviously guarded, and in accents purposely subdued. So little sympathy was there with the extreme views of the Radical section, that when a petition on their principles was presented, it was generally received with a universal titter. There was no room for party feeling on the subject, for the Cabinet had contrived to keep their secret so carefully, that up to the moment of an over-zealous understrapper's *faux pas* with the 'Times,' no one knew whether ministers intended to resist Mr. Bright or to outbid him. The feeling prevalent up to the 26th of February represented the genuine convictions of the House of Commons, with its combative instincts still unawakened, and its factious interests in abeyance.

With the House of Commons it is eminently the case that second thoughts are best; or, at least, they are very different from first thoughts. It is often curious to observe the contrast between the inclination of members towards a measure when first it is presented to them, and they have only their own un-

assisted intellects to guide them, and their views on the same measure after they have been enlightened by a little conversation at the clubs, and a few interviews with the whips. The conversions that are effected during that interval, the acquiescence that is changed into opposition, the doubts that blaze up into fervid indignation, are a fair meter of the force of the party screw. It was never exerted with more marvellous effect than on the occasion of the Government Reform Bill. When Mr. Disraeli rose to make his opening speech, the charm of expectation was nearly as fresh as ever. People could hardly believe that the 'Times' had really unveiled the mystery which had been preserved inviolate so long. It was still a matter of doubt whether the Conservative or the Liberal scale of the Cabinet balance had kicked the beam—whether the Bill had been drawn by Lord Stanley or Lord Hardwicke; and so the House listened with strained attention and ears as yet unprejudiced, while the lengthy coils of Mr. Disraeli's eloquence slowly unfolded themselves before it. During the earlier part of Mr. Disraeli's career, he was taunted with having been a novelist, and his style was set down as epigrammatic—an epithet which to the steady-going English mind expresses the lowest depth of frivolity; and he always speaks now under the constant terror of this reproach. He is perpetually rounding off and diluting his sentences, and beating out his statements with all the energy of a goldbeater, so that three minutes' worth of information shall stretch over a quarter of an hour of speaking, lest at any time his oratory should stray into the unstatesmanlike vice of brevity.

The House of Commons, however, is the creature of imagination, and having heard that in Peel's days he used to be lively, it is resolved to believe him lively still; but on the present occasion it was too anxious for self-deception, and its faith was sorely shaken. While Mr. Disraeli was expatiating in laboured periods on the general history of Reform, the members demeaned themselves very like a table full of hungry paupers during the ceremony of a Presbyterian grace. At last all the possible Reform Bills that had been or might have been were exhausted, and the orator divulged the long-expected mystery; and though none probably listened with thorough approbation, the signs of absolute dissent were very few. The Conservatives heard with something like dismay the 10% county franchise, the danger of which had been hitherto an article of their creed, conceded without a blow; but they were ready to yield up that and more also to escape the terrible Bradford schedules. The Whigs, as each well-clipped provision came out, gentle as a sucking dove,

heaved a sigh of unutterable relief; for the awful presentiment had haunted them that they were doomed, as a penalty for their many insincerities, to close their political career by opposing on Conservative grounds the bill of a Conservative Government. They were saved by the moderation of the ministerial proposal from the awful dilemma of having to choose between schedules and franchises that would have swept them from Parliament, and an unpopularity that would have debarred them from office; and they were grateful for the relief. An ominous murmuring ran along their ranks at the proposal for eliminating the borough freeholders from the counties, which was in effect an invitation to all the Whig county members to come and be kicked out. But otherwise the reception of the Bill from all except the Radicals was favourable; members went to dinner with evidently lighter spirits; and an impression at first seemed to gain ground that it would pass its second reading. Those who indulged in this sanguine prediction greatly underrated the antipathy of Whig leaders to the ignoble indolence of opposition. Between it and that wished-for haven there lay a perennial torrent of personal passions and selfish aims, which would have swept away far stouter resistance than could be offered by this puny and ill-judged compromise. In spite of the signal vengeance visited on the head of Sir Hugh Cairns for speaking the truth, it is impossible for any person not fettered by the hypocrisies of parliamentary etiquette, to doubt that the question of Reform might have been by this time settled satisfactorily to all who do not wish for it in a democratic sense, if it had not been for the 'private ends and personal advantage' of Lord John Russell.

A long interval followed the first reading for the purpose of what politicians call consideration, and ordinary people call intrigue. It was a period that was not neglected by the practised diplomatists, whose thankless task it is to combine into a single party three zealous leaders, and three conflicting schools of thought. Of the secret history of those three eventful weeks gossip saith much, but the historian can find no record. The porters at Cambridge House and Chesham Place have been culpably negligent in informing the public mind of the audiences that were granted at those rival courts. What inquisitorial processes went on within the walls of Brooks's and the Reform—what promises, what threats, what tender influences were used to induce moderate men to help in keeping alive the Reform agitation which in their hearts they abhorred, we of the outside world can never know. We know the results. We know that the Whigs went into that party conclave inclined to mend the

Bill, and that they came out resolute to destroy it; but we know no more of the mysterious manipulation to which they were subjected in the interim, than we know what goes on in M. Wiljalba Frikell's hat when he puts in an egg and brings out an omelette. The youngest of our readers need not, however, despair. If we may judge of the future by the past, they will no doubt be enlightened in due time whenever it may occur to the easy-conscienced heir of some great name, that it will pay to disregard a pledge of secrecy, and publish his father's confidential correspondence. Whatever the process was, it only did half its work. Sir W. Hayter gained the votes of the moderate Whigs, but he did not gain their good wishes. Lord Palmerston having been induced to promise his support to that which he particularly detested—an extension of the borough suffrage—indemnified himself by vehemently inveighing against any other sort of Reform that Lord John Russell was likely to propose. His followers, Sir G. C. Lewis, Sir G. Grey, and Mr. Labouchere, none of them usually very parsimonious of their words, maintained an impressive silence; and in clubs and drawing-rooms for a week before the debate, the old Whigs might be heard, like a fraternity of political *Flagellantes*, doing anticipatory penance for their meditated insincerity, and loudly crying *Peccavi, Peccavi!* for the vote they were intending to give. They perfectly well knew that the parts of the Bill to which they objected were so unpopular in the House of Commons that there was no chance of their surviving the ordeal of Committee. They plainly saw that every year's delay was playing into the hands of Mr. Bright, and giving him a chance of settling the question, not in times of peace and plenty, but in times of excitement, of short time, and of famine prices. They never concealed from themselves the certainty that Lord John Russell would at any moment sell them, their boroughs, and their principles for a sufficient offer of popular support; but the traditional names, and the traditional whip, and the old hacknied party taunts were too much for their independence; they could not shake off the old party yoke, though it was John Bright that held the reins and cracked the whip. It is a frightful instrument this party rule, which has the power of impressing the meanness and trickery of one upon scores of upright and honourable men, and of making them vote, like the election societies of a rotten borough, for the candidate that has bought their leader.

Long before the armistice of three weeks was over the combination was made, the intrigues were perfected, and every vote was registered, with the exception, of course, of certain Irish

members, who, for causes somewhat associated in our memories with the tactics that used to be in vogue in certain fickle constituencies, are usually afflicted with the curse of indecision till the very close of a debate. Everybody has admired the brilliancy of the discussion which followed. The public were justified in congratulating themselves that whatever might be said with regard to political morality, yet on the score of talent there was no degeneracy to lament. The speaking was undoubtedly strongest on the Conservative side. Sir Hugh Cairns fully maintained the high reputation he has so suddenly achieved. Sir Edward Lytton's was probably the most splendid piece of declamation that has been heard in the House of Commons since the days of Mr. Sheil. Even Mr. Disraeli contrived to borrow a little good taste for the occasion, and in his closing remonstrance with Lord John Russell was almost dignified. But it must have been a melancholy reflection for the Conservatives, notwithstanding this preponderance in debate, that of their three great champions not one was the natural leader of their party. One was a gifted lawyer, no doubt of Conservative opinions, but still as a lawyer necessarily looked upon as merely holding the brief of his party; and the other two were converts from the Radical ranks, for whom their most enthusiastic admirers will hardly claim any intense conservatism of opinion. The Liberals had still less cause for triumph. The speech of most mark on their side of the debate was that of Sir James Graham, and he is the impersonation, in its most virulent form, of the insincerity which is the chief reproach of the House of Commons. Later exploits, in a subsequent stage of the struggle, have brought his character and his misdeeds, and his great talents so marvellously marred, very forcibly before the public mind. But on the present occasion, the utter contempt of all principle, which was displayed by the intimation, that though opposed to the ballot in conviction he was ready to concede it to a growing cry, disgusted almost as many as his reasoning charmed. At Carlisle he carried it a step further, and recommended his nephew to the electors, on the ground that the nephew would support a measure to which he himself objected. There is no statesman who is a more striking proof of the utter insufficiency in England of any intellectual qualifications to recommend a man, who is not believed to be sincere. Repeated exhibitions of insincerity have utterly destroyed his influence in the House of Commons: and now that he is retiring in the evening of his days, with talents almost unequalled, and after a life spent in the service of his country, his character inspires about as much respect, and his opinions

carry with them as much weight as those of the younger Sir Robert Peel. Yet who would think there could be evil in that venerable aspect, and those tones of ripe and gentle wisdom? As he stands there near the gangway, his massive figure still and gestureless, his aged head sadly and earnestly but quite calmly contemplating his hearers, his accents, soft and subdued, pouring forth in a slow stream of unbroken but quiet eloquence, who does not reverently feel that he is sitting at the feet of the Nestor of the House of Commons? To foreigners who cannot understand English he must be the ideal of the sage and patient British statesman. But the illusion disappears when you listen to his words. So long as mere abstract questions are in debate, his speeches are only remarkable for luminous statement, and skilful concentration. But let some matter arise in which a personal attack or defence is involved, and at once the spirit of Thersites enters into the body of Nestor. No doctrine is too reckless, no position too outrageous, no fiction too flagrant for him to employ when there is an enemy to assail. He has been found out so often, that it is equally difficult to believe him either truthful or deceitful. If he is truthful, why does he so often say what is untrue? If he is deceitful, why does he select untruths that are so easily exposed? The act of making untenable charges seems of itself to have something in it so intoxicating that when he is engaged in it he forgets alike all reserves of prudence and all precautions against detection. When he is once on his legs he goes on inventing with a joyous recklessness, as if he had just seen all the books of reference in the world, Hansard included, happily burnt in a single holocaust.

A speech from Sir James Graham, therefore, brings with it far less assistance to the party he supports than his great ability ought to imply; and with the exception of Sir James Graham's speech, the Liberals, in comparison to their opponents, made but little show in the debate. Lord John Russell and Lord Palmerston were more than usually beset by their characteristic failings. Lord John was empty and pompous, and Lord Palmerston turned the whole into a joke. Mr. Sidney Herbert was embarrassed by the delicate task of dressing Liberal opinions so as to suit the palate of an obtuse but Conservative constituency. Mr. Edwin James, who was the only new light on this occasion, fully maintained the reputation for sagacity and good taste that has already been achieved for the metropolitan boroughs by the triumphs of Butler and of Cox. His *fiasco* was obviously a subject of the sincerest gratification to his sympathising audience. This poverty of oratory was damaging to the Liberal party, notwithstanding their success in the di-

vision. A debate has very seldom any influence at all upon the vote that follows it, and therefore its results are not to be measured by the division list. Its effect and its value are very much more indirect. Partly it acts as a collection of pamphlets intended to influence the public mind; but its more immediate use is to take stock of a party's strength in parliamentary ability, and to give a trial gallop to the competitors, great and small, for political office. In this point of view it was calculated to suggest sinister forebodings for the future. Among all the orators, and all the bores, on either side, there was one species of politician that was terribly deficient. The phalanx on each side showed plenty of field-officers, plenty of rank and file; but the intermediate link of rising subalterns was very scantily represented. There was an ominous want of young horses coming on. The race of political trainers seemed to have died out with Lord Melbourne and Sir Robert Peel. Those who were young and promising speakers in 1846 are now distinguished orators. With the single exception of Lord Stanley, who is self-trained, they are the youngest of the knot of statesmen who on one side or the other form the leading intellects of the House of Commons; but below them there is a break and a chasm, like some great 'fault' in geological strata, by which the normal gradation and continuity is broken off. When they die off there is nothing below them that can take their place. There are mute followers, there are noisy bores, there are mediocrities who have been weighed and have been found wanting, and who are only admitted into office as a *pis aller*; but the class of promising young men is a tradition of the past. Mr. Seymour Fitzgerald may perhaps form an exception; but with that reservation, the roll of statesmen fit to lead the House of Commons seems likely to close with the youngest pupil of Sir Robert Peel. The present array of intellect and eloquence is very brilliant; but we had better make the most of it while it lasts; for the ordinary tables of mortality almost enable us to predict the date at which it will cease. What is the solution of this phenomenon? Why has the supply, once so abundant, so suddenly ceased? Is it that England is poorer in talent than she used to be? Or is it that the game of politics has become so false, so full of mean tricks and dodges, and the incompatibility of uprightness with success so apparent, that the higher forms of intellect, not already made callous by use, refuse to be soiled by touching it?

The Ministry were beaten and dissolved. Whether they were to blame for dissolving is a question which it is hardly worth while to disinter. If they were wrong they have been

amply punished. After seven years of struggle, they are reduced exactly to the position which they held seven years ago—a minority of fifty with little chance of office, except such as may be offered by the temporary disunion of their antagonists. It is hard to discover any actual injury to the public interests that has resulted from the dissolution. Much has been said of the peril that has been incurred by the absence of Parliament at a moment when it was most needed to watch and to advise the minister. But the vigilance and the counsel of Parliament during a foreign crisis is merely one of those constitutional fictions which are occasionally paraded forth for the edification of the people. Generally it is understood that the less Parliament says upon those occasions the better; and if some ill-conditional Radical is venturous enough to ask a question, he is promptly suppressed by an appeal to the House to support the Government, and a reply to the erring member that it would be detrimental to the public service to tell him anything he wants to know. But the late Ministers inflicted on their own prospects an irreparable blow. They existed by virtue of the personal jealousies of their opponents, and there was no surer mode of effacing those jealousies than by referring them to the arbitration of the constituencies. Liberal electors know very little about the sections of the Liberal party. They are very indifferent to a comparison between the merits of Lord Palmerston and Lord John, and would only scratch their heads if asked whether they preferred a six-pound rating or a six-pound value. But that a man elected by the Yellows should vote for a Blue ministry, which gives all its postmasterships and custom-clerkships to the Blues, is, in the view of the single-minded British elector, a breach of the fundamental laws of political morality. A general election has always, therefore, proved fatal for the moment to the strange combinations and unnatural alliances, which, by favour of Mr. Disraeli's tactics, have of late become the normal state of the House of Commons. The Liberal malcontents, on whose revolts the Conservative party depend for the rare and fitful gleams of administrative existence that occasionally cheer their gloomy pilgrimage, are either cashiered, or pledged to penitence and amendment of life. A direct effect, too, is produced on the candidates themselves, over and above the terrors inspired by the menaces of disappointed aspirants for Treasury nominations. Before the election, the independent Liberal looks on Conservatives as a convenient instrument for revenging himself for the snubs and slights he has received from his Whig leader. After the election, he looks on Conservatives as enemies of the public weal, and disturbers of

his domestic peace, who have sent down a man to excite against him his own faithful borough, have given him a great deal of trouble, and have forced him to spend a mint of money, kiss a sickening quantity of babies, and swallow many mouthfuls more of Radical pledges than he was ever forced to swallow before. The profound and degrading humiliations of a contested election soon leave all other humiliations in the shade. The incidents of a contested canvass soon efface all other recollections from the mind. The days and weeks of screwed-up smiles and laboured courtesy, the mock geniality, the hearty shake of the filthy hand, the chuckling reply that must be made to the coarse joke, the loathsome, choking compliments that must be paid to the grimy wife and sluttish daughter, the indispensable flattery of the vilest religious prejudices, the wholesale deglutition of hypocritical pledges, all recurring hour after hour, and day after day, make a man remember with very philosophical indifference such indignities as Lord Palmerston's sharpest snap and Lord John's coolest cut. Whatever a man's grievances against his Whig leaders may be, they are as nothing compared to his thirst for revenge on those who have given him a three weeks' bath in the nauseous mire of a general election. To this must be added the effect produced on those Liberals who had indulged in the luxury of sectional squabbles in the very wantonness of their undisputed supremacy. So long as they thought their majority secure, an occasional excursion to the benches of Opposition was a very pleasant variety. Putting Mr. Disraeli on the Treasury bench, and telling him he was in power, was the same sort of amusement as dressing up Christopher Sly, the tinker, in fine clothes, and telling him he was a great lord. Being in opposition, and acting the factious minority, was a new sensation, like going a gipsying, or playing at shepherds and shepherdesses. But the elections of last May threatened rudely to turn this pleasant conceit into a reality. The Conservative gains were not numerous enough to save Mr. Disraeli, but they were just numerous enough to frighten the quarrelling Liberals into at least a temporary reconciliation. They resolved that it was high time to give up playing at minorities, and to put off to a more convenient season the adjustment of the little accounts between themselves which still remain unsettled. The vengeance of statesmen never dies, but it has a wonderful power of hybernation. Until the returning sun of an unchallenged majority shall warm their grudges into life again, no one will be able to detect anything to remind him of the fact, that Lord John and Lord Palmerston have turned each other out of office, that Lord Palmerston has called Mr.

Bright 'my honourable and reverend friend,' or that Mr. Bright has denounced him as the worst minister of the century. For the present, the overwhelming danger of a Tory majority effaces all other considerations. Soldiers always put off 'their duels when a battle is at hand.

That these were the feelings which forced the Liberals into cohesion when they came back from the dissolution was evident from the tone of the debate on the address. There was none of the doubtfulness, none of the lukewarm party zeal, which had paralyzed the speakers on the Reform Bill. The Liberals who spoke were thoroughly in earnest, while the Conservatives were feeble and dispirited, like men who knew that the hour-glass had run out and that their time was come. The consequence was, that the Liberal speaking was as far superior to that of their antagonists as it had been inferior in the previous faction-fight. For once in his life Mr. Milner Gibson spoke with genuine passion and shook off the indolent complacency of manner, which detracts so much from the effect of his speaking. Mr. Bright's lowered tone, and marvellously large concession to the spirit of party, were not, as in March last, a self-imposed moderation put on to suit the House of Commons, but the genuine results of the lesson taught him by the South Lancashire election. At last he seemed to be convinced that he had overshot the presumed democratic tendencies of the English people.

Other and more eminent speakers, such as Lord Palmerston and Lord John Russell, spoke more naturally and more forcibly from the relief of feeling that they were no longer under the necessity of justifying a dodge, but were advocating an honest party move, which did not profess to be anything else. Far the most brilliant orator in the debate was Mr. Sidney Herbert, on whose peculiarly plain-spoken and undiplomatic eloquence, an emancipation from the fear of his bucolic constituency had told with the happiest effect. But all these hard blows brought no sparks of fire out of the tough but inert mass on the other side. In making his own speech the moment the amendment had been moved, Mr. Disraeli had played out his only oratorical trump. It was one of his happiest efforts. Seldom for years has he exhibited so ready a power of repartee, or launched his sarcasm with such merciless effect. For once in his life his invective was so well deserved, that no one—except possibly Sir James Graham himself—felt it to be unjust or in bad taste. It was evident that the House thoroughly enjoyed the flagellation of that venerable scapegrace, whose blunders and whose audacity are the standing amusement of almost every session.

Nor was the enjoyment dashed by the feeling that it was purchased at the cost of any pain to a fellow-creature. The shower of sarcasms, that would have flayed alive any ordinary susceptibilities, scarcely left a scar on the indurated cuticle to which it was applied. But with Mr. Disraeli's speech began and ended the Conservative triumphs in this debate. Lord Stanley was mute; Sir Bulwer Lytton was ill; and Sir Hugh Cairns was placed in a position where a Chancery lawyer could not possibly succeed. In any case a lawyer, on a vote of confidence, defending in the lump a policy which he has had no share in counselling, is necessarily exposed to suspicion. But a Chancery lawyer, accustomed to exhaust a case by touching on every point, and wholly unused to appeal to the passions of his audience, is the worst possible speaker to wind up a debate. Sir Hugh Cairns' speech was able and close-reasoned, as his speeches always are: but addressed at midnight to a House which was on the point of reaping the fruits of six weeks' struggle, and of dooming an obnoxious Ministry, it fell intolerably flat. He might as well have read the Riot Act to a pack of fox-hounds in full cry.

The division by which the Ministry fell was the closest by which any Ministry within living memory has fallen, and its results were not certainly foreseen till close upon the end of the debate. An issue which depended on the decision of some seven men—mostly Irishmen—gave room to the last for every kind of sanguine speculation and varying rumour. How far the Cardinal's influence, gained for the Ministry by their presumed Austrian sympathies, might be strong enough to counteract the natural instincts of Irish Romanism, was a question of great perplexity to the whips. That he could only command seven votes, of whom one was his cousin, is a result which reduces the dreaded hobgoblin of 1850 to very innocent proportions. Of course, there were also rumours of other more sinister agencies being at work. At least two cases of actual corruption were confidently named, in which it was said that the two parties were bidding spiritedly against each other. In each case the result proved that the mantle of Sir Robert Walpole had rested, as in reason it should, on the shoulders of the Whigs. At least four cases were relied upon by the Ministerialists in which Conservative electors had supported Liberal candidates, under the pledge that they would vote for Lord Derby on a question of confidence. The fact that when it came to a division, only one of those four pledges was redeemed, may serve as a warning to Conservatives to keep clear of such low electioneering manœuvres.

Thus fell the newest edition of the 'organized hypocrisy,'—the second attempt to retain office by discarding the principles relied on in opposition, and by holding out unsubstantial promises to this or that malcontent section of antagonists. Perhaps this last disaster may convince the Conservative party that walking in two opposite directions at once is a feat which it is undignified to attempt, and not very easy to perform. They cannot serve two hostile principles at the same time. They may worship at the shrine of progress, or at the shrine of reaction, but they will take nothing by worshipping at both. In this shifting world, either *culte* will probably secure to them in the long run a reasonable share of popularity and power. As long as things go smoothly progress will be popular; as soon as the Republicans of America or the Socialists of France commit some wild excess, reaction will be popular; the only thing that will never be popular is the attempt to blend the two. Parties have succeeded that have sought to exclude religious dissentients from political power; and parties have succeeded who have striven in a contrary direction. But no party ever has succeeded or ever will succeed, that, while in opposition, invokes the most solemn sanctions to consecrate its horror of a Jewish M.P., and then consents to his admission without a struggle as soon as a political object can be bought by the concession.

Loss of character is an evil which has been strangely underrated by the Conservative leaders ever since Mr. Disraeli has been admitted to their councils. He is eminently alive to the power of public opinion; in fact, there are very few subjects on which he would not prefer it to his own convictions. But to the value of a public character he is wholly blind; and it is a blindness that has haunted him and hindered him through his whole career. Ever since he appeared as an important personage on the political stage, he has been perfectly incapable of estimating the secondary consequences of a party move. If he succeeds in striking his blow for the moment, he is perfectly indifferent to the possibility of a rebound. A little laxity of statement, a slight tergiversation, a pledge or two that need never be fulfilled, may be all that is wanting to induce a score of Radicals to vote with him, and put his opponents in a minority. If such is the case, he never scruples to eat the required dirt; and when the division is won he plumes himself on his dexterity. It is an adroitness that has been utterly fatal to himself and to his party. Men do not see principles paltered with, convictions loudly professed in opposition and surrendered in office, without drawing their conclusions with respect to the actors in such scenes. No amount of experience seems adequate to convince

him that what he gains in votes by such manœuvres he loses in character, and that while the votes are only gained for one night, the character is gone for ever. And character means votes in the long run. It is true that character does not always go for much among the electors. Constituencies have been found, and are found still, to send men to the House of Commons whom no prudent man would trust with a ten-pound note. But at the present day, while political parties are so balanced, and real political feeling so languid, the electors are only nominally the arbiters of the struggle. The section of society that really rules is the narrow stratum of thinking and educated men. There are a considerable number of constituencies—sufficient to turn the balance in the House of Commons—who are not very closely wedded to a political creed, but will return men of influence and eminence, to whatever political views they may incline: the result is, that while the Radical constituencies and the Conservative constituencies are constant quantities in the calculation of parties, these less partisan bodies furnish the varying element, which, according as it inclines, confers the preponderance on one side or the other. The triumph of rival candidates for power depends, therefore, far more on the opinion that may be formed of them by the comparatively small class of influential men, than on any preference of the country at large for either of the litigants in the microscopic controversies which divide them from each other. The country is quite as favourable to the policy of Sir R. Peel, and quite as hostile to democratic change, as it was fifteen years ago; and yet Sir Robert Peel had a majority of ninety, while Mr. Disraeli has a minority of forty. The real cause of the difference between the two epochs is, that the thinking and influential men admired Sir Robert Peel, and have a perfect abhorrence of Mr. Disraeli. He has more and more, as years have gone on, disgusted the class from which Members of Parliament, especially clever Members of Parliament, are drawn. The constant desertion in the Conservative ranks, and the difficulty with which they are recruited, is the best proof how poor a substitute the most dexterous legerdemain is for a frank and manly policy. In the late division, no less than thirty men, counting sixty on a division, voted as Liberals, who either were at one time themselves Conservatives, or are the sons of those who have been. And in the late election, the difficulty of the Conservatives was notoriously, neither money nor seats, but candidates. Many seats, both in counties and boroughs, were lost to them from the sheer impossibility of finding presentable men to contest them. It is not easy to recruit soldiers for a service in

which the campaigns, after many muddy marches, invariably end in the hoisting of the enemy's colours.

Nothing is so common as the complaint, that the parliamentary machine has broken down and will not work. Objectless party conflicts, frequent dissolutions, incessant ministerial crises, constitute, it is said, the whole result of the toil and moil of the House of Commons. We believe the solution of the difficulty is a simple one. Mr. Disraeli is in the proud position of being the grain of dirt that clogs the whole machine. The position, and with it the duty of the Conservative party has changed very much during the past year. They have renounced one by one all the peculiar tenets which separated them from the moderate Liberals. They no longer insist upon the exclusion of the Jews; they are lukewarm about church rates; and they are prepared to concede an extent of Reform which is far more than enough to satisfy Lord Palmerston's very sober appetite. There is now absolutely nothing to hinder them from a fusion with the moderate Liberals, except the ordinary obstacles presented by personal antipathies and claims. The formation of the existing Government has proved that in a case of public necessity, ordinary antipathies may at least be buried. But there is one antipathy so rooted that no change of circumstances or lapse of time is strong enough to allay it. Of the benefit to the country of such a fusion, all who love steady progress, without a violent transfer of power, can hardly speak too warmly. It is the only safe bulwark against revolutionary change: it is the only hope of restoring that stability of government which in these tempestuous days the national security demands. But the condition precedent to any such happy union is the disappearance,—or the miraculous conversion—of that soldier of fortune, with whom, it is now proved, not one of the leading statesmen in the House of Commons will condescend to coalesce.

But these are visions of Utopia. There is no escape on earth for man from taxes, or toothache, or the statesmanship of Mr. Disraeli. Dreams of emancipation only aggravate the horrible reality. We must turn for such comfort as we can get to the 'strong Liberal Government' which has been promised us, and which will last until Lord John finds an opportunity to trip up a colleague, or Mr. Disraeli contrives to taunt into revolt some section of their Radical allies. Until that distant period shall arrive, we may congratulate ourselves on a Ministry who are undoubtedly quite strong enough for their places, and whose conflicting opinions are so admirably balanced that they will certainly not move too fast, and will probably tumble to pieces if they attempt to move at all. The 'Times' tells us we are

not to look upon them as a Cabinet, but only as sixteen clever men in a room. If they have not got beyond the very pronounced individuality with which they left the House of Commons, the scenes in that room are likely to be lively. But at present we know so little of their yet undeveloped powers of combined action, that our only mode of estimating their merits is to examine them individually. As Lord John observed in speaking of the Reform Bill, with an elegance of English that at once designated him for Lord Malmesbury's successor, the ministers who are most conspicuous in the new Cabinet are those who are absent from it. It might be unparliamentary to say that the 'reconciled sections' have been bought, but it is at least abundantly clear that they have been sold. After all the treaties that were said to have been signed, and all the concessions that were so boastfully announced, is their vaulting ambition satisfied with the offer of two places in the Cabinet? Was it for this they met in Committee-room No. 11, braving the wrath of Hayter and the savour of the Thames? Was it for this that they declined as one man to sully their independence by listening to the Syren pasteboards of Cambridge House? Is this the end of all Mr. Charles Forster's humble labours? It is indeed a lame and impotent conclusion to three years of such fire and fury. If their terms were always quoted at the same moderate figure, probably a few quiet hints to Sir William Hayter would have saved the necessity of washing so much very dirty linen in public. It is too much to hope that such meekness will endure. It is to be feared that in course of time ambition will stir, and wounded vanity will assert its rights even in the gentle breast of a Horsman and a Dillwyn; and Messrs. Roebuck and Lindsay are not the men to deny themselves the satisfaction of proving, if an opportunity should offer, how sagacious was their estimate of Lord Palmerston's reforming zeal. It is said that Sir James Graham considers himself *rude donatus*; and that Mr. Bright was very willing to have taken office, but that he was unable, after two hours' interview with his tailor, to overcome certain difficulties of detail, on which it would be impertinent in us to dwell. But in spite of these friendly refusals, it will be too much for human nature to sit outside the game, and do nothing but look on. As time goes on, and mistakes are made, and weak points laid open, the old Adam will be strong within them. Like an old war-horse at grass, they will not be able to resist the trumpet-call; and we shall find them at their old posts, asking awkward questions, tendering candid advice, and generally acting the part of thorns in the sides of their valued friends. We must not, therefore, too early flatter ourselves with the

belief that we have arrived at the end of our Ministerial oscillations. A Ministry permanently strong can only be obtained by the creation of a homogeneous party. It is of little use to reconcile sections, as long as opinions are as antagonistic as before. The links which bind the Radicals to Lord Palmerston are still merely nominal. The difference between his political aims and theirs is as deep and yawning a gulf as ever; and there are not wanting plenty of disappointed aspirants, who will take care that no temporary compromise or unsubstantial concession shall be allowed to bridge over the chasm.

And yet if a combination of strong Ministers makes a strong Government, the new coalition is unquestionably strong. All are statesmen of great experience, if we set aside the newly-imported Manchester goods, who may be looked upon rather as earnest of a bargain, than as depositaries of power, and whose duties will principally consist in sitting still and being outvoted. The new Cabinet almost exhausts the administrative talent of the House of Lords and the debating talent of the House of Commons. In fact, like the American army, it consists entirely of generals. That the exploits of such a force will be brilliant there can be no doubt; but it is to be feared that it will be more like the tilting of a number of independent knights, than the united movements of a well-drilled battalion. Lord Palmerston has filled many difficult positions in his life; but it is no slight undertaking to drive such a spirited team as this, especially with a mischievous little imp sitting crouched under the box, constantly trying to get a sly tug at the reins, and poking at the horses to make them kick out at each other.

Even in point of character, the weak point of modern statesmanship, this Ministry makes a fair show. In the House of Lords the temptations to frailty are so few, and the career of ambition is so confined, that there is little merit in political virtue. There is no credit in being honest in an assembly where there are no Radicals to humour, and where speakers are not haunted by the difficulty of satisfying at once the blunt perceptions of their constituents, and the criticising intelligence of a number of rarely reconciled sections. The House of Commons is the true ordeal of political uprightness; and the present Cabinet can boast of as abundant a supply of that scarce article as the present hard times will allow. Mr. Milner Gibson's best friends would probably prefer to pass over the question of earnestness with a light hand. Perhaps we ought not to say too much of Mr. Gladstone in this respect. We are very far from believing him insincere; but the tortuous track along which his convictions have driven him has been

almost as damaging as actual dishonesty to his fame. Surely for Mr. Gladstone alone must have been devised the eastern fable, in which, after the fairies have vied in showering their promises and gifts on the infant princess's head, one ugly old witch who has been forgotten in the invitations comes forward and fixes on her one curse, by which all the other favours shall be marred. There must have been an Oriental Gladstone in the country where this allegory was imagined. High character, eloquence that no rival can approach, great financial skill, enormous capacity for work, have all been bestowed on him and bestowed in vain. Some malign influence strangely brooding over him forbids him to form any definite or consistent creed. Swayed now by passion, now by crotchet, he disgusts, by his violent oscillations, each political section in turn; and has become the standing difficulty of political leaders, who do not like to have a man with so much eloquence for their enemy, or a man with so many enemies for their friend. But he has colleagues of a credit more unimpaired. Mr. Sidney Herbert has passed through many political vicissitudes, and has navigated many zones of opinion, without any blemish on his fame. Sir Cornwall Lewis has been even more fortunate; for not only in the shower of dirt which the two opposing parties have been in the habit of casting on each other has any speck failed to light on him, but from the short duration of his political career he is free even from the reproach of inconsistency, to which in these days of rapid change almost every eminent statesman is exposed. No objection can be taken to Mr. Cardwell, except the want of originality, which limits his achievements in statesmanship to the production of a necessarily reduced copy of Sir Robert Peel. In honesty of purpose he is equal to any, and in a command of practical details he is inferior to few men in the House of Commons. But these three are unfortunately not the most prominent members of the Cabinet. They are balanced by two others, whom it is the hard fate of the Liberal party to be compelled to recognize as their most distinguished chiefs, but from whose intrigues and from whose character any Government which is unfortunate enough to comprise them is certain to reap disunion and disrepute. The career, the earlier promise, and the later disasters of Lord Palmerston and Lord John Russell are a striking lesson to budding Whigs, to teach them how little mere debating ability will avail without a character for honesty in the judgment of the commercial English people. They have fallen on evil days and on an unworthy age. Had they lived in the good old Walpole times, their powers would have secured them a reputation which no moral squeamishness would have impeached.

But since that period, people out of doors have made great progress in assimilating their code of public morality to that by which they measure the actions of private life. This change of feeling is not one that has originated in Governments or Courts. It is an influence that has moved upwards from the middle strata of the social atmosphere, and it has not yet availed to dissipate the mists of traditional Machiavellianism which still hang about the hoary summits of political power.

The desirableness of saying what you think, and doing what you promise, is now-a-days fully recognized in society: a dim consciousness of it is feebly indicated in the improved morality of the younger race, at least, of Liberal politicians; but it is far from having penetrated those two venerable heads, from whose wily deliberations more than half the House of Commons are condemned to draw the inspiration of their political ethics. Of the two, Lord Palmerston is certainly the best. He is as much superior to Lord John Russell, as a woman who has only had one lover is better than a social evil. He is not habitually false; his policy is marked rather by boldness than by intrigue; he has given way to only one deception; but that is a deception which has lasted through his whole life, and has vitiated his whole career. His training was Tory, his convictions are Conservative; but Liberalism is the winning game, and he has no taste for forlorn hopes. The result is a half-heartedness of conduct, and a doubleness of language that has ruined a reputation which might otherwise have been unblemished, has made him many bitter enemies, and left him few earnest friends. His disqualifications for being a Liberal are only two; they are, that he can't endure Reform, and that he abominates Dissent. But a man who wishes to lead a party of which Reformers and Dissenters are the principal supports, must needs occasionally present a tub, or at least a bucket, to each of these formidable whales. The gallant troops behind him are quite prepared to use their bayonets for the purpose of quickening his pace whenever it becomes too scandalously slow; and so he marches on a good deal more a prisoner than a leader. But yet the old Conservatism within him struggles desperately. He does not advance a single step without exhausting every pretext of delay that can be extracted from disturbances abroad, or calamities at home. The inevitable Reform is before him, the ranks of scowling and menacing Reformers are behind him; but he moves on to his doom with about as much agility and readiness as a prisoner walks the plank upon a pirate's ship. His Radical supporters have actually to draw blood before they can goad him an inch along the fatal pathway. Whether he will ever be driven to take the final leap is now doubtful. 'Art is

long and life is fleeting,' and Lord Palmerston's art is particularly long. He has contrived to lengthen out his procrastination with such superhuman ingenuity, that his friends have good grounds for hoping that death will arrive soon enough to rescue him from the more dreaded alternative of Reform. If we set aside the blow inflicted on public morality by the appearance of a great statesman in so unworthy a character, his career has probably been of considerable advantage to the nation. He has been the greatest ruler by bamboozle this country has seen for a long time. He has checked the advance of reckless innovators, not by open opposition, which they might have defied, but by the surer agency of a treacherous alliance. It may seem that this kind of dirty work is a political necessity, and that we ought to rejoice that some one has been found to do it. But we should be loth to acquiesce in a doctrine which would practically indorse the Emperor Nicholas's taunt, that the political necessities of a representative Government are incompatible with uprightness in public men.

Assuredly the career of his attached colleague, Lord John Russell, has not been of a nature to refute the charge; though we feel that we are intrepid in venturing a word against him after the testimonials to character volunteered in his behalf by those distinguished moralists Mr. Bernal Osborne and the present Sir Robert Peel. Nothing could furnish a more striking indication of the extent to which the M.P. mind is impregnated with the atmosphere of decorous shams than the amount of virtuous indignation that has been recently wasted in defence of this veteran intriguer. If his 'crafty and catching device' had been a 'first fault'—if it had been the act of a man, who like Mr. Herbert, or Mr. Walpole, or Lord Stanley, or Sir G. C. Lewis had a character for political morality to lose,—it would have been only commonly fair to attribute its apparent dishonesty to a sincere though unfortunate mistake. If the ace of trumps is found in the dealer's lap it makes a great difference in one's judgment of the offender whether he is the meek curate of the parish or an old *habitué* of Crockford's. Evidence to character is of importance even in a court of justice, and still more before the bar of public opinion. But what is the previous character to which Lord John Russell can appeal? Has not his political life been a succession of artful dodges in which cunning has been made to do the work of statesmanship? He divides with Lord Palmerston the credit of being the only existing statesman of any considerable standing who has never advocated a falling cause. Since he first floated to power on the cry of Reform, he has never lost an hour's credit by adhering to a conviction, when its popularity was slipping away. Like the Jew whom Sir

Culling Eardley's society baptizes in the north of London once a year, he has subsisted on opportune conversions. And if, as will sometimes happen to the wariest pilot, he has occasionally overrated the strength or the duration of a current, he has never failed to retrace his course with admirable promptitude and *sang froid*. A glance at his career since he became a man of mark will show how far he is worthy of the confidence of any who think that sincerity of conviction is a necessary requisite in a leader.

In 1835, it seemed that the time of the Irish Church had come. Lord Stanley had swept away ten of its bishoprics at one blow, and though public opinion was growling, it had not openly resisted. The majority of the House of Commons were still fierce Church Reformers, and the Irish Church was the weakest point of the whole Church Establishment system. Liberal opinion on the question seemed to have arrived at that condition of maturity at which a prudent politician might embrace it. The Roman Church has a doctrine that Christians are bound to obey the *de facto* government as soon as it is 'visibly' established. '*Vous avez la visibilité,*' was the phrase with which punctilious Catholics gave in their adhesion to Napoleon during the hundred days. Lord John extends the maxim from rulers to opinions, and only waits till a political doctrine has 'the visibility' to enthrone it as lord of his supple faith. Perhaps in 1835 he was encouraged to recognize this symptom a little too soon by his anxiety to find an effective missile to pitch at the head of Sir Robert Peel. In any case it was a typical instance of the sincerity of the developments through which his political faith is constantly passing. He moved a Resolution to the effect that no Tithe Bill for Ireland would be satisfactory which did not include a considerable seizure of Church estates for mixed education. He urged it in a speech of great warmth in which he dwelt earnestly on the wrongs of the Roman Catholic Church, and the just indignation of the Irish people; he appealed, as he well knew, to a House of Commons whose judgment was forestalled; he overthrew Sir Robert Peel, and obtained admission to office by favour of his Irish Church opinions; and when his purpose was served, and the feeling of which he had made use had proved to be a mere passing cry, he flung those opinions aside like a sucked orange out of which no further profit was to be squeezed. Side by side on the journals of the House of Commons, within four years of each other, stand the resolution carried by Lord John Russell in opposition that no tithe settlement without appropriation of Church property would be satisfactory, and the vote of Lord John Russell in power by which that opinion was

formally rejected. We will pass over one or two minor turns in his tortuous career—such as the Bedchamber Plot in 1839, and his sudden discovery in 1840 of the advantage of a lower fixed duty upon corn. He did not then venture to be a Freetrader. He left that up-hill battle to be fought by the sturdier convictions of honest men. Under their indefatigable efforts the question grew and grew, until it had reached that condition of ripeness, that it was a fit subject for a judicious conversion. Lord John was not wanting to his destiny. He announced his adhesion to Free Trade in the celebrated Edinburgh letter, whose only effect was to complicate the difficult position of Sir Robert Peel. Chiefly in consequence of that letter, he was forced to break up his Cabinet. That Lord John Russell did not step into his place and carry off the ripe apple of Free Trade was owing to no modest backwardness or chivalrous abnegation on his part, but simply to his inability to inspire in his friends the requisite confidence in himself. But he was not so to be balked of his reward. The tactics of 1835 were not worn out and might be tried again. Party faith is long-suffering, and political memories are short; and those who had trusted and been deceived in 1835 might yet be induced to trust again in 1846. The Irish members did trust him again, and aided by the angry Protectionists gave him a majority; again the same discreditable scene was re-enacted; again a Ministry was displaced that his convictions on Irish policy might be carried out; and again, as soon as he was installed, those convictions were scattered to the winds. The Irish Arms Bill must be recollected along with the 'Tithe Resolution, now that the footboy that was 'not strong enough for the place' has gone to service again and wants a character for honesty.

The episode of the Durham letter in 1850 and 1851 was the next performance. The late elections in Ireland show that Irishmen have not yet forgotten how insultingly their creed was trampled on in that saturnalia of bigotry by the champions of civil and religious liberty. It was a splendid opportunity for a cheap display of public virtue. A very slender amount of courage was required to enable the Minister to stand by his old principles. The tempest was boisterous for the moment, but was obviously transient. It is hard to understand how a statesman of Lord John's experience could have really fancied that the strong and steady current in favour of religious liberty could be lastingly turned aside by any passing political event. But he had never sacrificed place to principle when he was young, and he was not going to begin now that he was old. He made use of his Conservative opponents to pass a measure, which for futility indeed was peculiarly his own, but which, as far as prin-

ciple was concerned, might have been proposed by Mr. Perceval or Lord Eldon. And having carried this penal law in the teeth of all the professions of his life, in order to shore up the foundations of a tottering Ministry, he treated the English Protestants as he had treated the Irish Catholics in 1835 and 1846; he tossed away the pledges with which he had bribed them as soon as they had served the purpose of the moment; and during the succeeding three years of his official life, he allowed the law which he had passed, and which was openly and constantly infringed before his eyes, to remain an absolute dead letter. This fever-fit of intolerance will probably be noted by posterity as the great blunder of Lord John Russell's life. It was the most thriftless bargain ever made by statesman. He had bought what character for sagacity he possessed by a lifetime of tolerably prosperous intrigues; and he sold it for the capricious and stormy caresses of an ephemeral agitation. He secured the praises of the 'Record' and the homage of Sir John Dean Paul; he incurred the bitter hatred of religionists who never forget, the undying vengeance peculiar to a sacerdotal organization, which will probably dog him to the close of his career.

If we were to exhaust the catalogue of the tricks by which he has eked out his official life, we should exhaust our readers also. We must pass by the many years of resistance to Reform, till the ministerial majority began to waver, and the sudden conversion to it as soon as it became necessary to prepare obstructions for his successors. It is unnecessary to remind either Lord Palmerston or the world of the chivalry with which his chief tripped him up in 1851. We need not do more than glance at the 'stab in the dark' given to the last Coalition Ministry, and so suggestive of the probable fate of the present one; or at the Vienna negotiations of 1855, when Lord John was detected counselling war in his speeches, and peace in his despatches. These exploits, with all their aggravating circumstances, are still fresh in the public memory. They were the cause of that ignominious exclusion from office, which now, after four years' penance, his party have doubtfully and grudgingly remitted. But it is important that the public should remember that these slippery intrigues were not the exceptional failings of a man terrified by any appalling crisis. They were of a piece with his whole public career. To fasten himself on to any cause or any party that would tow him into office, and relentlessly to cast them off the moment they were losing ground, has been his unvarying policy from the first. He only treated Lord Aberdeen and the Duke of Newcastle as he had treated the Irish Catholics in 1835 and 1846, and the English Protestants in 1851. In saying one thing to Count Buol, and another to the House of

Commons, he only compressed into a few weeks one of the opportune conversions which generally take a couple of years.

It is not a very comfortable reflection that this is the pilot to whose integrity and skill we shall have to trust during the fury of the storm which has just burst on Europe. These are not times for amateur experiments in diplomacy. Just now we should prefer to dispense with pilots who 'steer too nigh the sands to show their wit.' We should feel more secure of the future if the statesman who wrote the Russian despatch of 1853, and conducted the Vienna negotiations of 1855, had been allowed to amuse himself with education and sociology, or with giving constitutions to Victoria and New South Wales. For there are no ordinary elements of danger in the present crisis of affairs. We are entangled in an alliance which is leading us to sure destruction; and now that we are beginning to find it out, we are afraid either to break off or to persevere. The analogies of the past are before us, and their testimony is only too plain. Napoleon I. had a plan for subjugating England, and it was this. He first 'liberated' Italy, then he crushed Austria, then he crushed Prussia, and finally he tried to crush Russia. At this stage of the proceedings his scheme happily broke down. If he had succeeded in crushing Russia, he would have then led the assembled forces of the Continent against England. Napoleon III., whose master-passion is the imitation of his uncle, who carries it down to things the most minute and the most contemptible, but who also declares that he will profit by his failures and avoid his mistakes, does not for the present, perhaps, intend to attack Russia. Instead of attacking her he has bought her. But the other portions of the programme remain the same. He has 'liberated' Italy: his army is now on the banks of the Rhine ready to assail Germany: and neither Prussia nor the smaller German powers seem to entertain the slightest doubt as to the fate which is reserved for them. They have armed, and are arming, to the teeth; and are resolved that Austria, their vanguard, shall not fall, if fall she must, alone. But in England it is the fashion for men, priding themselves on their calm judgment and far sight, to treat Napoleonic perfidy and ambition as a chimera, fit only for the brains of croakers and old women. Is this security built on a firm foundation, or is it merely the self-illusion of statesmen whose digestion requires a comfortable creed? What ground is there for believing that France will not attack England as she has attacked Austria, with whom she was in the closest alliance less than three years ago? Is it that the French people are averse to it? It is known that the only war which, before the intoxication of actual conflict seized them, was popular among the French, was one that

should win back the trophies of 1815. Is it that the emperor is himself averse to it? There are plenty of Englishmen who have heard him say, while he was yet an outcast in the purlieus of St. James's Street, and had no diplomatic motive for reserve, that it was his destiny to become Emperor of the French, and then to become the avenger of Waterloo. Everybody laughed at the insane delusion; but now that the first half of the strange boast is true, there is nothing incredible in the second. Is it that the emperor has professed his friendship for us? That signature has been dishonoured too often to appeal successfully now to our faith. He who has perjured himself to his own people is not likely to keep faith with strangers. He has sworn that he loves England, as he swore that he loved democracy. He has sworn that he will maintain the English alliance, as he swore that he would maintain the Constitution of 1848. The old proverb runs—'If a man deceives me once, he is a villain; if twice, I am a fool.'

'But then he is the liberator of Italy.' He comes—so dreams the simple English Liberal—freedom's chosen champion, with charters and liberties in his hand, to burst all unjust bonds, and shatter all coercive laws, and to bestow upon the land he has overrun, good government, firm rights, and free course to human thought. No doubt when he has established these things, he will go back and announce his achievements to his people. He will publish a proclamation to tell of the results of the Italian war. It will probably run somewhat in this strain: 'In my character of champion of civilization, I have rescued the Italians from the despotism of Austria, and have conferred on them many blessings, of which those among you who can remember the year 1847 will be able to appreciate the value. I have established freedom of the press without the system of *avertissements*, which, as you know, I am compelled to maintain here. I have abolished all imprisonment without trial, which, I regret to say, has been as yet impracticable in France. I have erected a representative Legislature, in which the debates are public, and to which all legislative power is committed—a course which the enemies of order have prevented me from taking in Paris.' And the French will rejoice that they have a genuinely liberal emperor, who so far denies the natural instincts of his heart, as to take the children's bread and give it to the stranger.

Do our guileless Liberals really believe that the French emperor will deliberately set up, next door to him, this standing accusation against himself—this ever-speaking incitement to revolt? Do men gather grapes of thorns and figs of thistles? Is it from the hands of despots who have trampled on liberty at home, that men look for liberty abroad? Doth the same

fountain give forth sweet waters and bitter—a *loi des suspects* at Paris, and a Habeas Corpus at Milan? When muftis preach Christianity, and cardinals teach Methodism, when prostitutes preach chastity in the streets, and temperance is inculcated in gin-shops, then we shall believe that the hero of the 2nd of December is the enthusiastic evangelist of Liberty.

Quando
 Padus Matina laverit cacumina,
 In mare seu celsus procurrerit Apenninus,
 Novaque monstra junxerit libidine
 Mirus amor, juvet ut tigres subsidere cervis,
 Adulteretur et columba miluo ;

then we shall give credit to the reality of this monstrous marriage between tyranny and freedom.

But to do the French emperor justice, he does not profess to be advancing the cause of freedom. Liberals in England, whose hatred of Austria amounts to a madness, or who have dwelt on the sufferings of the southern half of Italy until they have deprived themselves of the power of sober thought, have chosen to represent the war in Italy as a war in behalf of liberty. But the powers who are waging it make no such pretence. M. Kossuth, who would like nothing better than to see all the powers of Europe fighting to liberate each other, distinctly insists that, in the present war, there is no question of substituting a good form of government for a bad. And his assertion is corroborated by the course that events have taken. The governments of Tuscany and Parma have been notoriously mild, and under their rule a very large amount of freedom has been practically enjoyed, but it is in these states that the revolution has broken out. The governments of Rome and Naples are bywords throughout the civilized world for perfidy and lawless cruelty; it is chiefly due to their crimes that sympathy with the cause of Italian liberty has spread so far; and yet at their capitals the revolution has been absolutely silent. And even the Italians, easily as they are misled when some Fata Morgana, haloed with the glories of historic association, glitters before their eyes, would have laughed the whole project to scorn, if the Tiberius of France had presented himself before them as the future Hampden of Lombardy.

The whole question that is at issue is not freedom but nationality. The claim with which we are asked to sympathise is not the claim of each man to have a part in the government he obeys, and to be relieved from unnecessary restraint, but it is the alleged right of bodies of men with complexions of one colour, features of one cast, and language of one parentage, to enjoy a separate political existence from those whose language,

features, and complexion belong to a different category. Archduke Ferdinand was a mild ruler, Ferdinand, King of Naples, was a monster; but in expressing himself the Archduke employed a language of gutturals, while the King employed a language of liquids. Consequently, it was a sacred cause, a noble crusade, the aim of every true philanthropist, nay, of every honest man, to eject the mild ruler, and to leave the monster in the full possession of his opportunities of tyranny for the present. It was no question of good or bad government. No true Italian would have tolerated the archangel Gabriel, if he had ruled as 'Kaiser,' or have cared to disturb Beelzebub himself, if he had ruled as 'Rè.' And there are large bodies of Liberals in England, who, with that aptitude for blundering which is the inalienable heritage of well-intentioned folk, are prepared to join in submitting the merits of all governments and all political systems to this extraordinary test. They are not, however, content to preach their system nakedly as they believe it, for they know that it would gain little currency among a people who have no qualms of conscience in governing at least a score of subject nationalities. But by the constant use of the words 'liberation' and 'emancipation,' and by dwelling on the sufferings of Italian patriots at Naples, which have nothing to do with the matter, they contrive to create a vague notion in people's minds that the time-honoured cause of freedom, and its new Brummagem counterfeit, nationality, are precisely the same things; and Englishmen, who always pride themselves on being superior to subtle distinctions, go away perfectly content with that conclusion.

Now it scarcely requires a moment's argument to draw the line between the two. The history of the world proves, as a matter of fact, that freedom is an almost indispensable condition alike of the moral, material, or intellectual progress of mankind. There is not a vestige of such proof in favour of independent nationalities. The two freest and foremost empires in the world, England and America, are a mere congeries of sometimes fused, sometimes ill-cemented races. The genuine blood of an unmixed nationality exists in peculiar purity in the forlorn and degraded empire of Spain. And the distinction established by history is one that lies on the surface of the nature of man. Whether it be from pride or indolence, men will not use or develop their energies under the pressure of external constraint. In the course of time, therefore, an oppressed people must become apathetic unless it be employed in war, and so become a scourge to its neighbours; and the evil is one that, as generation follows generation, grows constantly worse. But the mixture and blending of nationalities is the process by

which originally all nations are made up ; it is the effacing of the curse of their primeval separation ; and far from stunting them, the mutual intercourse of contrasted natures fosters and draws forth the energies of each. Where the union, as in most cases, at first takes place by conquest, there is bitterness for a generation or two ; but it is a bitterness which time infallibly wears away ; and it is the mode in which all great empires have been gathered together. If the doctrine of nationalities is to be carried out, there is no great empire in the world but must be dissolved. They are all of them formed, not by the mere expansion of a single race, but by the encroachments of one vigorous race upon its weaker neighbours. Those who would undo this process, who would set up again the barriers which have only been raised by accidental separation during the lapse of ages, and which it is the constant tendency of the inventions and of the growing intercourse of modern times to break down, are, by whatever name they may call themselves, clogging and not forwarding the civilization of mankind.

But in truth this new cry does not come from the friends of liberty, but from its foes. It is tyranny's last plot against freedom. We have had four great nationality cries in Europe of late years—Hellenism, Panslavism, Panteutonism, and the *Unita Italiana*. The two first were originated by the despotic government of Russia : the third has been chiefly fostered by the despotic courts of Germany : the fourth, bred some fifty years back in the studies of poets and professors, has become for the moment a prosperous and triumphing cause, entirely by the help of the despotic sovereign of France. The revolutionary ferment of 1789, however hideously exaggerated, was yet a genuine aspiration after freedom. The movement to which it gave birth was finally extinguished by the national enthusiasms of Germany and Russia in 1813. The despotic sovereigns took the hint. They saw that there was among their ignorant populations a spirit yet stronger than the spirit of freedom which they dreaded, and they took that spirit for their ally. From that time all the despotic courts except that of Austria, whose objections to it were obvious, became more or less converts to the doctrine of nationalities. It served them a double purpose. It gave Russia a hold on the Greek and Slavonic population of Turkey ; it gave Prussia a stepping-stone towards the hegemony of Germany : and to both it furnished a sentiment for the wilder brains among their subjects to rave about, which should be less dangerous than a cry for freedom to the established state of things. The Emperor of the French is only scrupulously following the tactics that were then laid down. He has the

embers of an extinguished freedom to trample out ; and he has a lust for military success to gratify. The nationality cry will serve both these ends. It furnishes a vent for popular enthusiasm, a ground for a foreign war, and a pretext for foreign conquest. The war he has undertaken is, therefore, in effect a war for the maintenance of that which is the most hateful despotism in Europe, because raised on the ruins of the fairest liberty. But he calls it a war of liberation, and, therefore, the last subverter of a constitution has the satisfaction of marching forth to his enterprise with all the Liberals of Europe at his heels.

But, after all, these matters concern us only distantly. Whether he be the liberator of Italy or not, does not make Toulon less of a menace to Malta, or Cherbourg less dangerous to Plymouth. Whether his army have or have not been employed in the cause of liberty, it will not the less return flushed with its triumphs, and eager for new battle-fields and a more congenial war. In presence of our own country's danger, foreign appeals for sympathy can awaken but a cold response. Nothing that he may effect abroad ought to drive from our minds the necessity of immediate and effectual self-defence. We may leave it to Mr. Bright to prate about the irritation which a powerful Channel fleet and a well-fortified seaboard will cause in the emperor's mind. We flatter ourselves that we judge him better in believing that respect and not irritation is the emotion which those preparations will excite. But, whoever may be irritated by it, we must be safe : and our neutrality must be one which no malignity can misconstrue. We could wish that at such a crisis our foreign policy was confided to a Minister more honoured in Europe and more trusted at home ; and that our exchequer was in the hands of one less suspected of paltering with the security of the country for the sake of rounding off a financial scheme. We could wish that they and their colleagues were not pledged to the side from which alone our danger can arise. Yet even their incapacity and their bias are smaller evils than these constant changes at the helm. We may willingly bear and forbear many things, to secure at least during the present distress something like stability of government. So long as the Italian sympathies of the present Administration do not link us once more to the chariot-wheels of France, so long as their Manchester alliance does not result in leaving our ships half manned and our coasts unguarded, an abstinence from factious moves and a generous support will be the duty of all who desire to preserve for England the blessings of peace and freedom, in the midst of deepening slavery and the spreading flames of war.

LORD CORNWALLIS.

Correspondence of Charles, First Marquis Cornwallis. Edited, with Notes, by Charles Ross, Esq. Three vols. Murray. London, 1859.

THESE volumes refute the old adage 'that a great book is a great evil,' for they must interest even the most dainty reader, and they are a valuable addition to our materials for biography and history. Their editor is married to a daughter of the second Marquis Cornwallis, and is a son of Major-General Ross, for some years the aide-de-camp, and always the friend, of the soldier and statesman whose life is now before us. With these advantages of all but personal knowledge of his subject he has combined the merits of singular industry and accuracy; and, accordingly, his work has sterling excellences not often current in this species of literature. Its real substance—the Papers of Lord Cornwallis—has not been interlarded with dull *re-chauffés* from Annual Registers, or Debates in Parliament, so frequently the staple of editorial illustration; but it is connected and explained by a brief memoir, which tells us all that we want to know, and is written in a pleasant and perspicuous manner. The notes at the foot of almost every page give a short but exact account of the personages alluded to in the text, and are quite a marvel of patient perseverance: a little too genealogical perhaps, but always to the point, and full of interest. The index—so necessary for more than sixteen hundred pages—we suppose would satisfy Lord Campbell himself, who tells us that a complete index should be a 'condition precedent' to copyright. On the whole, no work of this kind, of the last few years, has, we think, combined so much original matter of value, with so thorough, careful, and modest a commentary. It fulfils exactly the Roman ideal of the records of greatness, 'Non tam poeticis decora fabulis, quam incorruptum rerum gestarum monumentum.'

The name of Cornwall suggests a birthplace for the family of Cornwallis. We find it flourishing in Ireland in the fourteenth century—a part of that dominant Anglo-Norman oligarchy which for four hundred years held the country in feudal subjection. One of its offsets in 1378 was Lord Mayor of London, and he probably made a considerable fortune by commerce, for he became a large landed proprietor in Suffolk, and sent his two sons to the parliaments of Richard II. and Henry IV. One of

these sons purchased the estate of Brome, which for three hundred years was the principal residence of the family; but although the Cornwallises were thus established among the English aristocracy, and, we are told, 'took an active part in public affairs,' they seem to have escaped proscription during the Wars of the Roses, and the establishment of the Tudor dynasty. At the slippery crisis of the Reformation they preserved their estates though adhering to the ancient faith; and in 1553 Sir Thomas Cornwallis, sixth in descent from the Lord Mayor, did good service to Mary Tudor by aiding in the suppression of Wyatt's rebellion. In the reign of Elizabeth, like other Catholics, he fell into disgrace, and no further record of the family occurs until the period of the Great Rebellion, when his grandson, Sir Frederick, who had been made a baronet by Charles I., distinguished himself among the defenders of the House of Stuart. At the Restoration, Sir Frederick was made Baron Cornwallis, and, having inherited from his mother the property of Culford Hall, which from this time became the family seat, he transmitted his title and estates to his grandson Charles—'le beau Cornwallis' of Anthony Hamilton. This handsome courtier was also a successful politician. He joined the standard of the Prince of Orange at the right moment; and having completely got rid of all Stuart associations by his union with the widow of the Duke of Monmouth, he became a firm supporter of the Revolution. His son trod in his father's footsteps; and his grandson Charles, having secured a good deal of parliamentary influence, and having married a daughter of Lord Townshend, received the reward of his devotion to the Whig cause and of his connection with Sir Robert Walpole, by being raised in 1753 to the rank of Earl Cornwallis and Viscount Brome.

Charles Marquis Cornwallis was the eldest son of this nobleman, and was born in 1738. He was educated at Eton, where a future Bishop of Durham gave him a blow that made him squint slightly in after life, and occasioned the humorous sally of Curran, 'that Lord Cornwallis had always a *steady eye* for Irish interests.' He entered the army in 1756; and having learned the rudiments of his profession at the Academy of Turin, under the auspices of a Prussian officer, and of the somewhat bacchanalian Marquis of Granby,—a training which the hero of Culloden considered, in his peculiar dialect, '*as very usefull to Lord Broome*'¹—he was made lieutenant-colonel of the 12th Foot in 1761, and fought well in the last campaigns of the

¹ This work shows that 'the king's English' was not safe with any one member of the then royal family. This letter of the Duke of Cumber-

Seven Years' War in Germany. On the death of his father in 1762, he became a member of the House of Lords; and although, in 1765, he was appointed aide-de-camp to the king, and during the next ten years he held several lucrative offices of the crown, he was almost always in opposition, except for the brief period of the second Chatham administration. He resisted the violent proceedings of the Grenville government against Wilkes, and in 1763, with seventeen other peers, signed a protest against the famous resolution of the House of Commons that 'privilege of parliament does not extend to seditious libels.' With the Chatham party he held aloof from the Rockingham Whigs, and upon the passing of the Declaratory Act he divided alone with Lords Shelburne, Poulett, and Torrington, in favour of Lord Camden's amendment, which, in accordance with the doctrine of his leader, denied the right of England to tax America. No record of his subsequent votes exists, for the division-lists of the day have not been preserved, and he seems never to have spoken in debate; but Horace Walpole informs us that he disapproved of the American policy of the government; and it is easy to guess what an adherent of Lord Chatham must have felt with respect to the irritating measures of the Duke of Bedford, and the unconstitutional tyranny of Lord North. We may be assured that he supported Lord Chatham's scheme of conciliation, and that he opposed the bill for shutting up the port of Boston, for altering the charter of Massachusetts, and for depriving the colonists of trial by jury. It is, however, not a little curious that he should have received several substantial proofs of favour from George III. at this period; and that he should have thought the retention of office under the crown compatible with his opposition to it. A letter of Junius in 1770, appears, indeed, to explain away this anomaly, but, as Mr. Ross observes, it certainly existed; and, so far as Lord Cornwallis himself was concerned, it is sufficiently clear from the volumes before us that he had no chivalrous scruples as to holding office from political adversaries.

The American war broke out in 1775; and notwithstanding his alliance with Lord Chatham, who took an exactly opposite course and withdrew his son from the king's service, Lord Cornwallis accepted the command of a division in the army with the local rank of lieutenant-general. In February 1776 he set sail at the head of this force, which was intended to co-operate with that of Sir Henry Clinton in restoring the royal authority

land, and, in the next generation, those of George III., of the Prince of Wales, and of the Duke of York, are all full of bad grammar and bad spelling.

in the Carolinas. After a tedious passage of nearly four months, Lord Cornwallis and General Clinton with the squadron of Sir Peter Parker began their operations by an attempt to reduce Charleston, the principal seaport of South Carolina. Their plan, probably pursuant to instructions from home, was to make an inroad into the southern provinces, to put down the rebellion there, to reassure the loyal inhabitants by the presence of a British army, and then to effect a junction with Sir William Howe, who was about to attack the Americans under Washington from Halifax. In consequence, however, of the gallant defence of Sullivan's Island, which commanded the river leading to Charleston, this enterprise altogether failed; the British troops were beaten off with a considerable loss; the fleet suffered a good deal of damage; and after a useless waste of about two months, the expedition against the Carolinas was given up, and Lord Cornwallis with his division set sail to join the main army of Sir William Howe. Thus inauspiciously, as Mr. Ross observes, the American campaigns of Lord Cornwallis opened; and though he displayed in them subsequently more judgment and ability than any other British officer, except General Carleton, his evil fortune accompanied him to their close.

In August 1776 the force under Sir William Howe, now strengthened by that of Lord Cornwallis, amounted to nearly thirty thousand men. That of Washington, which was covering New York, was little more than half as numerous and was ill equipped and badly officered. It was the turning-point of the American war, and there can be little doubt that it might have been concluded in one campaign, had the British army been ably commanded. But Sir W. Howe was a feeble and an inefficient general, who seems to have been unequal to handling a large force or to availing himself of any advantage, and in this, and the next year, he let slip more than once the only chance England had of conquering America. On the other hand, Washington, though not a professed soldier, was a man of undoubted military genius, with a singular skill in irregular warfare; and if his levies were only an untrained militia, they were filled, for the most part, with ardent patriotism, and they were fed from a people accustomed to the use of arms. At the opening of the campaign, however, the British were victorious at all points; and had they been allowed to follow up their successes with vigour, it is almost certain that they might have crushed their enemy. Within three weeks from his landing on Long Island, Sir William Howe entered New York in triumph, having defeated the Americans with great loss at Brooklyn. Shortly afterwards he won another battle on the White Plains,

and established himself firmly in the Jerseys, which his troops overran with careless boldness. The army of Washington, baffled and dispirited, began to lose all military consistency, and retreated in confusion behind the Croton; the fears or inclinations of the inhabitants of the province induced them to range themselves on the side of the British; and unquestionably, at this moment, a real general might have suddenly brought the war to a termination. Lord Cornwallis seems to have been fully sensible of this, and, though only in a subordinate position, lost no opportunity of harassing the enemy, and of urging upon his chief a concentrated attack upon their broken and undisciplined forces. But Sir William Howe let the golden occasion pass, and having halted the division of Lord Cornwallis at Brunswick, he allowed the residue of his army to scatter itself abroad, and suffered Washington, who had thought that all was lost, to place the Delaware between himself and his pursuers. Here he was permitted to reunite his shattered army, and the British having been incautiously separated into small bodies, he was enabled before the close of the year to make prisoners of the entire detachment at Trenton, and to fight the indecisive action of Princeton. The result was, that the successes of Howe were almost counterbalanced; that the democratic party in the Jerseys began to revive; that the moral prestige of the British was all but lost; and that Washington, who had been meditating a flight behind the Alleghanies, could now tell the Congress at Philadelphia that there was still truth in the Declaration of Independence. For these events, however, Lord Cornwallis was not responsible, and although he certainly was not a great commander, it seems probable that the issue would have been different had he held the place of Sir William Howe.

The campaign of 1777 was less unfortunate to the British, but it displayed, even more remarkably, the incapacity of their commander. Early in the spring, Sir William Howe had assembled at Brunswick an army of upwards of thirty thousand men with the view of capturing Philadelphia, the very focus of the rebellion. The town was only sixty miles distant, and was accessible by an open and not unfriendly country; while the sole military obstacle in the way was Washington, with a force, which at the moment did not exceed eight thousand men. A bold stroke might easily have finished the campaign, might have overwhelmed the American leader, and have placed a British garrison in Philadelphia. But precious weeks were lost in idle skirmishes, and when, about the close of June, Sir William Howe had discovered that Washington was strongly entrenched at Middlebrook, and that a battle was necessary to

open the direct route to Philadelphia, he suddenly changed his original design for a plan which Lord Stanhope justly characterises as folly. Abandoning all the ground he had won in the previous year, and hastily evacuating the Jerseys, he sent a part of his army with General Clinton to New York, and embarked with the rest on shipboard for the purpose of reaching Philadelphia by the mouth of the Delaware. Having been informed, however, that the passage was well fortified, he resolved upon reaching his object through the bay of Chesapeake; and after making a circuit of some hundred miles, and wasting nearly two months on his course, he landed in August at the head of the Elk river, still at a distance of seventy miles from Philadelphia. It is not surprising that a French officer who was watching this curious strategy should have been 'astonished at its tedious timidity,' nor yet that Washington should have been unable to comprehend it; but it is pretty clear that Lord Cornwallis did not approve of it, and that the blame of it lies with the incompetent commander-in-chief, who, as it was then said, 'did not know what to do with his army.' When at last Sir William Howe came face to face with his enemy along the banks of the Brandywine, the superiority of the British forces quickly displayed itself; the Americans were routed with great slaughter; and a bold attack which Lord Cornwallis made on their flank and rear deserved and received much commendation. The pursuit was, however, feeble; and although Philadelphia was taken in September, and the Americans were afterwards defeated in several skirmishes, the campaign, as a whole, was not decisive; the spirit of the colonists remained unshaken, and Franklin at Paris could say with some truth 'it is not General Howe that has taken Philadelphia, but Philadelphia that has taken General Howe.'

In the spring of 1778, Lord Cornwallis went on leave of absence to England, and was present in the House of Lords at the pathetic scene which was the cause of the death of Lord Chatham. He returned to the seat of war in the month of June, and led a division of the British army from Philadelphia, now abandoned on account of the menacing position which was being taken by the squadron of D'Estaing off New York. The fatal illness of Lady Cornwallis, who was devotedly attached to him, and had pined in hopeless grief since he had left her side, brought him home again in the same winter; but, when the first burst of sorrow for her loss had passed away, he offered anew his services to the king, and reached New York in August 1779. Sir Henry Clinton was now general-in-chief in America—Sir William Howe having been superseded—and Lord Cornwallis

had been appointed second in command, with a dormant commission that gave him the first rank, in case of the death of his superior. By this time the American war had entered on a new phase; and, although the immediate issue was still doubtful, the ultimate independence of the colonies had become almost certain. The Family Compact had been renewed; the fleet of D'Orvilliers had swept the Channel; and France and Spain, with a suicidal but vindictive policy, were straining every nerve to aid the Americans. The strength of England was divided by her numerous assailants; and though her armies in America had never been beaten in a fair field, their renown had been tarnished by several fruitless campaigns, and especially by the disaster of Saratoga, while their force in respect of men and material had been reduced to a perilous extent. On the other hand, the American levies had become more efficient, and though quite unequal to their adversaries in open fight, were now an expert and serviceable militia; the democratic party was triumphant in the northern provinces, and in the southern was very powerful; and the prospect of immediate succour from France and Spain had made the mass of the nation more resolute than before to shake off the yoke of England. As yet, however, the issue hung in the balance, and the campaign of 1779, though indecisive, had been, on the whole, favourable to the British. Sir Henry Clinton, with considerable judgment, had transferred the war from the Jerseys and Massachusetts to Georgia and the Carolinas, where the royalist party were still numerous, and there was little chance of a patriotic resistance. Before Lord Cornwallis had joined him he had taken Augusta and Savannah, had beaten General Lincoln and D'Estaing with great loss, and had successfully opposed a Spanish attack on Florida. When the two British generals had united their forces, they sat down to besiege Charleston in South Carolina; and the place fell in May 1780, with the loss of six thousand men, and about four hundred guns, after a long but not a very determined resistance. This blow caused a great sensation in America; and it is now known that Washington, who had been obliged to remain in the north, had never been in such a want of men and military appliances, and that the terrified Congress fully expected that the British generals would find nothing able to withstand their progress.

At this juncture, however, Sir Henry Clinton received the intelligence that a French fleet was about to make a descent on New England; and, accordingly, he hastened northward with the bulk of the army, leaving Lord Cornwallis in South Carolina with only four thousand men under his orders. It is

now impossible to determine whether this step was imperative; but the division of the British forces at once prevented any decisive operations, occasioned the loss of the southern provinces, and led to the events which caused the ultimate issue of the war. Sir Henry Clinton established himself at New York; and from this point he distributed his troops over a vast area of territory, apparently thinking it advisable to menace a number of places at the same time, and to make a variety of unimportant demonstrations against the enemy. At this period he was writing most despondingly to his own government, yet he seems to have believed that a series of unconnected incursions would be the best method of subduing the colonists, and of neutralising a French division in their favour. Accordingly, he permitted his line of operations to extend from Philadelphia to South Carolina, without providing for the communications of his forces, and, as it would seem, being chiefly anxious to maintain a continual attitude on the offensive. This strategy was strongly disapproved of by Lord Cornwallis, who, in an important letter to General Phillips, gave it as his opinion that the army should be concentrated in Virginia or New York 'where a successful battle might give us America,' and that 'desultory expeditions,' along a large space of half-cleared and intricate country, would either be fruitless or would end in disaster. This opinion, however, did not prevail, although, with due deference to Lord Stanhope, the event appears to have justified it completely. Lord Cornwallis, with his weak force, was left unsupported in South Carolina; and the want of harmony between the two generals impeded the operations of the army. The results were not slow in being developed in the campaigns of 1780-81. Though he gained the battles of Camden and Guilford, and did his best to keep the inhabitants to their allegiance, Lord Cornwallis gradually found it impossible to retain the Carolinas, and two slight checks that he sustained at the King's Mountain and Cowpens, restored the influence of the democratic party in them, and virtually made them hostile to the royal authority. Leaving a detachment under Lord Rawdon in South Carolina, according to the orders of the commander-in-chief, he marched into Virginia in August 1781; and when there he established himself at Yorktown, at the entrance of the Bay of the Chesapeake, apparently with the object of communicating with Sir Henry Clinton by the sea,¹

¹ It became subsequently a matter of bitter controversy between Sir Henry Clinton and Lord Cornwallis whether Yorktown had been the exact place indicated for taking a position and fortifying it. Sir Henry Clinton, who, in the campaign of 1781, was beginning to suffer severely on account

which as yet was open to the British fleet. Here, however, he was directed to fortify himself with a part of his army, and to send the residue to his superior, who was beginning to feel uneasy about New York, which was again supposed to be the mark of a French attack.

Lord Cornwallis declared that 'the position at Yorktown was bad and unhealthy,' but he had nothing to do but obey his orders, and so long as the British had the command of the sea, his situation was not one of danger. With a force of about seven thousand men, he threw up several redoubts around the town; but before, as he wrote, 'his works were half finished,' he found himself beset by an overwhelming but unexpected calamity. While Clinton and the British fleet were occupying New York, De Barras from Rhode Island and De Grasse from the West Indies suddenly concentrated thirty-six sail of the line at the entrance of Chesapeak Bay, and thus intercepted the approach to Yorktown from the sea. At the same time Washington and De Rochambeau, by a preconcerted movement, drew off their forces from Philadelphia, and after a rapid and masterly march, brought nearly twenty thousand men to the land side of the English position. Lord Cornwallis and his garrison were thus encompassed in a net, from which there was no possibility of extrication; but, although he anticipated the result at once, he prepared to defend himself with true British valour. Washington broke ground on the 30th of September, 1781, and opened his fire on the 9th of October; the French fleet co-operated from the sea; and for five days an incessant discharge of shot and shell from about fifty pieces of heavy artillery was poured upon the scarcely-protected enemy. The defence, however, was very obstinate; a gallant and effective sortie was attempted which caused the silencing of two batteries; every gun that could be brought to bear was fought to the last; and Lord Cornwallis made a desperate, and all but successful effort, to force Rochambeau's lines at their weakest point, and from

of the division of the British forces, desired Lord Cornwallis, in the month of May, 'to secure a harbour for line-of-battle ships on the Chesapeak.' Lord Cornwallis, in a despatch of July, 1781 [Vol. i., p. 108], replied that he was about to fortify Yorktown, 'in obedience to the spirit of your Excellency's orders,' and his superior officer entirely acquiesced. It seems, therefore, plain that Sir Henry Clinton must be held accountable for the occupation of this position; and that, but for the unfortunate event, he never would have raised a question on the subject. In fact, it is clear that Yorktown was safe from any attack until the sudden arrival of De Grasse exposed it from the sea side. We say thus much because Lord Stanhope, not having had the advantage of reading these volumes, inclines to throw the blame of this strategy upon Lord Cornwallis.

thence to escape to New York. In the mean time he had sent repeated messages to Sir Henry Clinton for assistance; but although that general, forgetting all past differences, showed the greatest eagerness to come to the rescue, his transports were bad, and slow in getting ready, and the British fleet was far inferior to that of the French, which blocked up his only possible passage. Lord Cornwallis soon perceived that aid from his colleague was hopeless: on the 15th of October, with true military honour, he wrote that 'the safety of the place is so precarious that I recommend that the fleet and army should not run great risk in endeavouring to save us;' and on the 19th, after a most gallant and soldier-like resistance, he capitulated to his combined assailants. It is singular enough that, upon the same day, the armament of Clinton, with twenty-six sail of the line, put at length to sea to give its aid to the garrison of Yorktown; but, as it could have done this only by attacking thirty-six French ships, and the era of Nelson had not yet arrived, it was perhaps as well that a fairer occasion was found for overthrowing the far-famed 'Ville de Paris' and her consorts.

The fall of Yorktown decided the fate of the American war; but, notwithstanding this great misfortune, Lord Cornwallis suffered nothing in reputation, and upon his return to England on parole, he was well received by the king and his brothers in arms. He had been led to suppose that he would be exchanged with Colonel Laurens immediately, but Congress delayed the negotiation for several months, and he was not finally liberated until the preliminaries of peace had been signed in 1783. He now mingled again in public affairs, and after a brief period of irresolution gave in his adherence to the party of Lord Shelburne, although personally he was a friend of the leader of the coalition; and thus, on the formation of the cabinet of Mr. Pitt, he secured that favour which George III. was not slow to extend to Whig converts. In 1785 he was intrusted by the king with a confidential mission to the court of Prussia, for the purpose of reviving her former alliance with England, which the peace of 1762 had shamefully compromised. At this time the three great powers of Europe were meditating a league against England, whose strength, it was supposed, had been broken by the loss of America, and France in particular, unconscious of her coming doom, was eagerly seeking to establish her influence in Holland, and thence to strike a blow at her ancient rival. Lord Cornwallis was instructed to attempt a renewal of the treaty of the Seven Years' War; but, though Frederick received him very graciously, and dismissed him with every profession of respect for England and her sovereign, he

either shared in the belief of the approaching decline of her power, or resented her former abandonment of him, and civilly refused the proffered alliance. On his return home, Lord Cornwallis found himself appointed to the office of Governor-general and Commander-in-chief of India, and he accepted it without delay, though his letters to General Ross at the time are full of complaints of the misery of succeeding to the great proconsulship. It is highly to his honour that the administrations of Lord Shelburne, and of Mr. Pitt, should have concurred in singling him out for this important office; but we must add, that, notwithstanding his assumed reluctance, we suspect he was always ready to receive it from either of them, although on one occasion he actually quarrelled with Mr. Pitt and refused to have any dealings with him, because the great minister had not thought fit to select him as the successor of Lord Waldegrave in the government of Plymouth. Despite of the pardonable partiality of Mr. Ross, we cannot help thinking that a tenacious love of power and place was one of the characteristics of Lord Cornwallis.

Lord Cornwallis was Governor-general of India from 1786 to 1793. Hitherto, we have seen him only as a third-rate politician, or as a general—brave, indeed, and judicious, but—not remarkable for genius or fortune. It was in his government of India that he first displayed the eminent qualities which entitle him to hold a distinguished place among the worthies who have advanced the imperial destiny of England. Before he arrived at Fort William, the names of his countrymen throughout Hindostan had become associated with deeds of heroic valour, of rapacious ambition, and of unsparing perfidy. From the day on which Surajah Dowlah fled ingloriously from Plassey to that which witnessed the rout of Hyder Ali at Porto Novo, the arms of the island conquerors had prevailed against immense odds, alike over the Hindoo, the Mahratta, and the Mussulman. The timid Bengalee had seen with fear and trembling how twelve hundred Englishmen aided by eight thousand sepoy had overthrown the mighty host of the Great Mogul at Buxar, and had wrested the sceptre from the grasp of the descendant of Timour. The wild horsemen who gathered round the standard of the Peishwa, and, issuing from the table lands of Central India, had been scarcely repelled by the Mahratta ditch around Calcutta, had repeatedly been taught that their fierce onset was idle against the strength of the British bayonet. Even the brilliant squadrons of Hyder Ali, that but lately had swept the plains and villages of the Carnatic, had a few years before recoiled in wrecks from the scanty infantry of Coote; and, far away be-

yond the limits of the advancing empire, among the tribes which inhabit the slopes of the Himalayas, or dwell among the feeding streams of the Indus, a rumour had spread that a race of infidels from across the sea had everywhere subdued the followers of the Prophet, and held in bonds the many nations that bowed at the shrines of Brahma and of Vishnu. But the glory of these great achievements had been tarnished by acts which, though usually marking the progress of conquerors among an alien and inferior people, had yet cast reproach upon the British name, and had made it as much an object of hatred and terror as that of the Romans was to the Celts of Galgacus. 'To slaughter, to plunder, to spoliage, to make a solitude, and call it peace'—the words in which the savage chieftain described the rule of the Imperial City—might have been well applied by many thousands in Hindostan to the governments which preceded that of Lord Cornwallis. The conqueror of Bengal had set the example of rapine, and had proclaimed to all the Company's servants by his own conduct that success might justify fraud and forgery. The splendid administration of Warren Hastings had saved and consolidated our Indian empire; but it had been defaced by the shameful league against the Rohillas, by the cruelties practised on the Begums of Oude, and by the spoliation of Cheyt Sing; and it had been characterised by a systematic disregard of ordinary justice and particular compacts. Grievous, however, as had been the authorised acts of the British government, they were as nothing compared with the various and multiplied wrongs which had been perpetrated in the East by British subjects. During the thirty years between 1757 and 1786, the civil and military servants of the Company in India, like the followers of Cortez and Pizarro, seem to have thought that the provinces they were subduing were the natural objects of plunder and oppression. In war, the English armies committed excesses of pillage which reduced populous cities to desolate heaps, and abandoned cultivated regions to the tiger and the hyæna. In peace, the agents, the residents, and the collectors of the government, mingling a contempt for the races they had subdued with a desire of self-aggrandizement, indulged themselves in a long career of peculation and extortion resembling that of the publicani of the time of Nero. They were almost always badly paid by their employers; but they generally contrived to amass large fortunes in a few years, by acts which, as it was said, 'made whole villages shrink at the sight of a white man.' They sold British protection to the highest bidders among the native princes, and betrayed them without scruple for a better offer. They exacted the revenues of the conquered provinces with a

severity which soon made their terrified inhabitants regret the domination even of the house of Delhi. In the commercial transactions in which they dealt with Hindoo or Mahomedan, on behalf either of the Company or of themselves, they delighted in displaying the power of victors, and the bad faith of men who could always throw the sword into the balance. The result was that, when Lord Cornwallis became Governor-general, the rule of the English in India was hated no less than it was dreaded; that, having been stamped with duplicity and crime, it had no hold upon opinion but that of fear; that it was never safe from a general combination against it; and that there was always danger, lest England, in the language of Burke, 'having drunk deeply of the cup of the gorgeous harlot of the East might suffer for the deadly and abominable draught.'

It is the just glory of Lord Cornwallis that he perceived the evil and the peril of this state of things; that he laboured sedulously, and not without success, to amend it; and that the administrative reforms he introduced, and the principles of equity and good faith which he infused into the government of India, have, in no slight degree, contributed to its power and security. His biographer, like that of Lord Wellesley, may claim for him the noble epitaph, '*super et Garamantas et Indos Protulit Imperium.*' It is true, of course, that other Englishmen in India have far surpassed him in military exploits, though he was the first to lead our soldiery to the walls of Seringapatam, and though he added a district of twenty-five thousand miles to our empire. It is true, also, that his governor-generalship was not marked by the extraordinary genius of a Warren Hastings, by the successes due to 'the Wellesley of Mysore and the Wellesley of Assaye,' and by the peaceful triumphs won for India by Lord William Bentinck. But this great end he did accomplish, that, having succeeded to a government resting only on the power of the sword, detested generally throughout its dominions, and licensing or conniving at the oppression of its subjects, he obtained for it some share of respect and affection; established it on a better basis than that of terror, without reducing its military efficiency; relieved it from the imputation of worse than oriental treachery which formerly had attached to it; and by several reforms of a social character, showed that it had other objects than conquest and tyranny. In the words of one well competent to judge, 'His measures, and, above all, the spirit with which he inoculated administrations, eventually purified it: he was the first honest and incorruptible governor India ever saw, and, after his example, hardly any governor has dared to contemplate corruption. Other men were conquerors, so was he; but his victories in the field—

and they were brilliant—are dim beside his victory over corruption.’ It is not too much to say that our rule over the vast continent which extends from the Punjaub to Cape Comorin, could no more have prevailed without the honesty, the good faith, and the benevolence, the seeds of which he sowed in it, than without the swords of those who fought at Plassey, or in after years made the ghastly ramparts of Lucknow one of the noblest resting-places of fame.

The generalship of Lord Cornwallis, when governor of India, was tested in one campaign only, in which he displayed equal vigour and judgment. In 1782, Tippoo Saib had ascended the usurped throne of Mysore, and, in spite of the bloody memories of the war of 1780, and of his own experience of the strength of England, he was resolved to carry out the policy of his father, and to exterminate the island race from the seaboard of the Carnatic. The time, however, had not yet come when, backed by France, and incited by a fatal ambition, he was to proclaim himself the champion of India, united against Great Britain; and he was at enmity with the Peishwa at Poonah—the nominal head of the Mahratta confederacy—and with the Nizam at Hyderabad, the viceroy of the ill-fated Shah Alum. Each of these powers could bring a large army into the field, the irregular cavalry of which gave formidable aid to the dense but tardy European battalion; and, as at this time they hated and feared the Sultan of Mysore, it had been the practice of the English government to court their alliance. Though Lord Cornwallis did not approve of this policy, he was soon compelled to adhere to it, for in 1789 the armies of Tippoo assumed a hostile attitude and began to ravage the territory of the Rajah of Travancore, who had always been a friend of the British. A league was made between the Company, the Nizam, and the Mahrattas against the fierce and ambitious barbarian; and in 1790 two British divisions, under Generals Medows and Abercromby, were set in motion from the opposite points of Madras and Bombay, with the view of passing up the long defiles which connect either coast with the rocky uplands of Mysore, and of concentrating in the midst of the Sultan’s dominions. A third division, under Colonel Maxwell, was spread along the passes which lead through the Mysorean Ghauts to the Carnatic, and through which, in 1780, the horsemen of Hyder Ali had swept torrent-like up to the villas of Madras. The campaign proved unfortunate on the whole, though, as usual, the British forces found no equals in the field, and its success would probably have been certain, had the Nizam and the Mahrattas kept their word, and sent any cavalry to counterbalance the active squadrons of the enemy. On the

side of Bombay, General Abercromby advanced to Cannanore ; Colonel Hartley routed the Sultan's army in a gallant encounter ; and in a few weeks the British standards were waving on the slopes which look down from Mysore on the coast of Malabar. But the attack from the Madras side, though at first successful, was ultimately repelled with considerable loss, and instead of effecting their junction with Abercromby at the point agreed on, the forces of Medows and Maxwell were compelled to fall back, and to protect the avenues of the Carnatic. At the close of the campaign, the Madras army, which in June had reached the passes that ascend to Mysore from the Carnatic, and had established its communications between Coimbatore and the sea, had retreated as far as Trichinopoly ; while Tippoo Saib, at the head of his numerous and ferocious cavalry, scoured the level country between Caroor and Trincomalee, and actually pushed as far forward as Pondicherry, in the hopes of finding in the French settlement some successor of Lally or Dupleix who would aid him in his fixed resolve of striking down the white cross from the Fort of St. George and of driving the English infidels from their colony. The inhabitants of Madras, who only ten years before had felt the desolating sweep of his father's sword, began again to tremble for their safety, and General Medows incurred a great deal of censure for not having proved a more fortunate commander.

At this juncture, Lord Cornwallis determined to assume the command, and, if possible, to chastise Tippoo severely for his audacity. In a minute addressed to the Court of Directors, he disclaimed, with characteristic generosity, the notion 'that the military operations would be conducted more ably or with more success by myself than by General Medows ;' and he declared that his only reason for interfering was, that his acquaintance with the Nizam and the Peishwa, and the moral effect of the presence of the Governor-general at the head of the army, might have important political consequences. It is pleasing to think that Gen. Medows was equally chivalrous ; and that though superseded with less courtesy than Lord Cornwallis had intended, he fully justified, by his conduct in the campaign of 1791, the gallant words which he had addressed to his superior at its commencement : 'Be assured I will exert myself to execute your plans as if they were my own, and be delighted should they prove the best.' On the 12th of December, 1790, Lord Cornwallis arrived at Madras with considerable reinforcements, and at the close of the next month he took the field with the entire of the Carnatic army under his orders. The general scheme of the campaign was the same as that of the previous one, though it differed in one or two important particulars ; and it was crowned with a

complete and brilliant success, which more than compensated for the late comparative failure. On the 5th of February, Tippoo had hurried back from Pondicherry, and with his army stood at the front of the southern passes which lead from Vellore to Seringapatam. At these points Lord Cornwallis made a feint which completely engaged the Sultan's attention; and, at the same moment, the mass of the British army, by a skilful march most ably executed, was suddenly brought up through the steep defiles of the pass of Moogla to the vicinity of Bangalore, a fortress at the north of his capital. The heart of Mysore had now been penetrated; and after a series of fierce but unimportant skirmishes with the cavalry of his active enemy, Lord Cornwallis reached in May the banks of the Caveri, about nine miles only from Seringapatam. He had already been joined by the forces of the Nizam, and he was in communication with Abercromby, who, according to the plan of the last campaign, had entered the Mysore territories through the Malabar passes. Tippoo Saib, having suffered severely in every encounter, had now assembled a large force to defend his great stronghold, and terrified at the progress of his invaders, was endeavouring to treat separately with the Nizam and the British. A general action was now expected; but the hour of the Sultan had not yet come; and for a time the turbaned defenders of Seringapatam were to remain unscathed behind their ramparts. In the difficult march from the Carnatic to Mysore the material of the British army had suffered terribly; and the admirable light cavalry of the enemy were ever cutting off its foraging parties, and intercepting its communications. The horse of the Nizam had proved of little use; and Lord Cornwallis now found himself at the head of an army, which, though victorious in every encounter, was being encircled by an alert and Parthian foe, was fast losing all means of moving its artillery, and, at the commencement of the rainy season, was straitened for food and encumbered with sick and wounded. Lord Cornwallis retreated from Seringapatam on the 26th of May, and fell back to the neighbourhood of Bangalore, while Abercromby's divisions retraced their steps to the quarters they had originally left. The commander-in-chief spent the next few months in reducing a series of hill forts, which, crowning the rocky steeps of Mysore, and manned by bold and marauding garrisons, formed a line of strong outposts for his enemy. At length, having heard that Abercromby was once more advancing, and having been joined by the Mahratta contingent, and by considerable reinforcements of men and material, Lord Cornwallis resumed the offensive in the winter, and by the end of January, 1792, led an army of more than forty thousand men to the strong defences of Seringapatam.

Two arms of the Caveri, encircling this fortress, protected it by a wide fosse, beyond which rose a thick belt of bamboos and thorny shrubs which formed a second barrier to an assailant. In the space between these natural lines, lay an enclosure about three miles in length, and three quarters of a mile broad, and here, behind a canal and some skirts of rice-fields, and under the guns of six large redoubts, Tippoo Saib had encamped an army of fifty-five thousand men. These outworks bristled with heavy cannon; and behind them on a rocky eminence, looking down on the fair gardens of the rajahs of Mysore, stood the citadel of Seringapatam, with three hundred pieces of artillery along its ramparts. Lord Cornwallis, having, on the 6th of February, reconnoitred this formidable position, determined to storm it by a night attack. Placing his cavalry and allies in the rear, he divided his European and sepoy forces into three columns of about three thousand bayonets each, and as night fell he launched them forward against the extensive line of defences. General Medows and Colonel Maxwell were at the head of the right and left columns; the centre was under his own command; and as the moonlight shone on their close but scanty files, the Mahratta and Mogul horsemen were heard to exclaim that the commander-in-chief was going to fight like a private soldier in the forlorn hope of a handful of infantry. The surprise of the sultan was complete; and by ten o'clock the column of Lord Cornwallis had penetrated through the double barrier in its way, had forced an entrance into the camp, and had driven Tippoo's artillerymen from their pieces. The attack on the left was also equally fortunate; but on the right, the column of General Medows, having diverged too far in that direction, and having become entangled in the canal and rice-fields outside the great enclosure, was prevented from joining the main body at the time and place which had been agreed on. Thus the centre and left attack remained unsupported; and as the early dawn revealed the feeble force of the British, the troops of Tippoo returned to the assault, and endeavoured to crush them by dint of numbers.

The fire and the onset of the enemy were now very severe, but Lord Cornwallis still held tenaciously by his position, and, having full confidence in his second in command, exclaimed—'If General Medows is above ground this will bring him.' After sustaining the attack for several hours, he was at last reassured by the appearance of his succours; and Medows, at the head of his column which had suffered greatly from the guns of one of the redoubts restored the perilous and unequal contest. The troops of Tippoo now gave way at all points, and as the morning sun arose upon the scene, the British army gazed on a noble

triumph. The Sultan's forces had taken refuge in the citadel ; the camp with all its cannon had been abandoned ; and while four thousand of its defenders had fallen, an enormous mass of stragglers and deserters had already left their colours, and were hurrying off in wild confusion. As Lord Cornwallis had probably anticipated, this brilliant success decided the war ; and though Tippoo made a desperate sortie upon his lines, and the English general was compelled to bring up his heavy guns against the fortress, the moment that the first parallel had been opened, the Sultan was glad to make overtures of peace, and, at whatever cost, to conclude the struggle. After a vain parade of negotiation, in which he tried again to separate the British from their Mahomedan allies, he consented to cede to the Company one half of his territories ; to pay three millions and a half sterling towards the expenses of the war ; and to surrender the prisoners whom his father had made in his bold invasion of the Carnatic. He was, besides, compelled to give up his two sons as hostages to Lord Cornwallis ; and there is something touching in the account of the scene which closed this brief and important campaign. The two youths were brought into the presence of Lord Cornwallis and his staff, and, having dismounted from their elephants, were placed by him each at his side. 'These children,' said the interpreter of Tippoo, 'were this morning the sons of the Sultan my master, they must now look up to your lordship as a father.' The English general gave an earnest assent ; but Destiny had marked them for another fate.

The fame, however, of Lord Cornwallis as Governor of India depends less on his military exploits than on his general civil administration. He had the good fortune to succeed to his high office at a moment when the management of the empire required a thorough reform, and when, for the first time, there was a possibility for the executive to accomplish it. During the thirty years which had preceded 1786, the misrule and the tyranny of the British in India were attributable, in a great measure, to the *regni novitas* of their dominion ; to the suddenness with which a company of merchants had been converted into the lords of a vast territory ; and to the want of organization and experience in the government which had been established in the three Presidencies. Clive and Hastings, when adding province after province to the empire of their masters, and contending against numerous and powerful enemies, with a handful of ill-disciplined forces, were often driven to commit, and to sanction, acts of cruelty and injustice which were repugnant to their natural temper. The Court of Proprietors in

Leadenhall Street, which until 1772 were virtually the Governors of India, were indifferent as to the conduct of their servants in their recent conquests, provided their dividends were remitted punctually. The system of government established under the Regulating Act of Lord North, though certainly a step in the right direction, did not give sufficient power to the executive, neglected altogether many subjects requiring attention, and even introduced abuses peculiar to itself. It was not until after the Act of Mr. Pitt, and, accordingly, until Lord Cornwallis became Governor-general, that the executive in India preserved enough of authority to make its influence felt with steady and beneficial consequences. It is not easy to enumerate all the evils which necessarily beset it, nor all the difficulties which it had to encounter, before it established at last the functions of good government in its dominions. In 1786, when Lord Cornwallis arrived at Calcutta, he found almost every department of the public administration inefficient or out of order; the grossest iniquity pervading the dealings of the Company's servants with the native races; and a feeling of hatred prevalent against the name of an Englishman. The army was in a shameful condition, recruited from the offscourings of the gaols and hulks of London, and officered frequently by adventurers of desperate fortune. The method of collecting the landed revenue in the Presidency of Bengal, after having undergone all kinds of changes, had been lately committed to English functionaries, who ground down without remorse the various interests connected with the soil, and whose general conduct may be estimated from the example of one, who, with a salary of about 1200*l.* a year, enjoyed an income of 40,000*l.* Though the time had passed when Sir Elijah Impey and his colleagues had terrified all Bengal by the oppression of the Supreme Court, and a line had been drawn between the legal jurisdictions of the Company and the crown, the judicial system of India was in a most unsatisfactory state, in consequence of the uncertainty of the law as it was administered in the Company's tribunals, and of their tardiness and corruption. The system of police throughout India was also most inefficient; and, to complete the picture of maladministration and bad government, we should add, that the Company's servants were in the constant habit of receiving bribes from the native princes, of making enormous profits at the expense of their employers, and of putting in force throughout the extent of their dominions all the machinery of terror, of wrong, and of fraud, for the purpose of aggrandizing their own fortunes.

We have already alluded to the moral weapons with which

Lord Cornwallis boldly, and, to some extent, successfully encountered these great and numerous evils. Setting to all India the example of perfect probity in his government, enforcing, as far as possible, fair dealings with the native powers, and watching jealously over every part of the administration, he was enabled to check a great deal of oppression and fraud among the Company's servants, and to make Hindoo and Mussulman alike acknowledge that the rule of the English was not an un-mixed evil. At the same time, as Clive had done before him, he repeatedly urged upon the Directors the necessity of removing the main incentives to wrongs and abuses on the part of their dependents, by securing to them liberal and ample salaries. He paid the greatest attention to the improvement of the army; recommended, in the strongest terms, that it should be differently recruited and officered; and laid down a plan for amalgamating it with the king's service. His despatches show that he had conceived the design of digesting into different codes the various laws obtaining in India, and of moulding them into a regular system of justice—a project which even Mr. Mill has praised with a warmth little congenial to his nature. This great work, however, remains undone; and the chief specific reforms accomplished by Lord Cornwallis were the permanent settlement of the Land Revenue of Bengal, the organization of the judicial system of that Presidency, and the regulation of its police upon a plan which since 1807 has, however, been modified.

The object of the Permanent Settlement was to secure to the British government, in the shape of a fixed assessment, that portion of the produce of the land in Bengal which in the East has always belonged to the sovereign, and at the same time to reduce the oppressiveness of its exaction, which had been of late most grievous to the cultivators of the soil. For this purpose Lord Cornwallis resolved to assign the ownership of the province to the Zemindars—that is, to the former collectors of the Mogul dynasty, who had gradually acquired considerable proprietary rights in the land—subject only to these two conditions, that they should pay a perpetual quit-rent to the State, equivalent to about a half of the produce, and that they should not levy more than a fixed revenue, to be regulated by a definite scale, from their ryots or sub-tenants. By these means he calculated that a landed aristocracy would be created, who, being secured in their estates, would promote their improvement, and would gradually assume towards their ryots the kindly relation which exists between the landlords and tenants of England. Although this great reform has not been completely successful, and has been

violently condemned by Mr. Mill and other writers, it is certain that it was an important step in the social progress of India, and that it has been productive of much advantage. Undoubtedly the heavy pressure of a very large quit-rent, and the rigid punctuality with which it was always enforced, have prevented the Zemindar proprietors of Bengal from acquiring that certainty of possession which is a pre-requisite to landed improvement; and, were there no other cause, the confiscations of their estates for non-payment have been too frequent to allow us to classify them as a free aristocracy of landowners. Undoubtedly, also, it has been much easier to create in India a system of tenure founded on English ideas, than to animate it with the English spirit and character; and while the Zemindars as a body have remained wasteful, improvident, and tyrannical, the condition of the ryots has not been assimilated to that of our agriculturists. Nevertheless the system was a great boon at the time, and on the whole has secured the ultimate tranquillity and the improvement of our largest province in India. It freed at once the unhappy ryot from the multiplied extortions to which he had been subjected. It encouraged cultivation among the Zemindars, though not in the degree that had been anticipated. And the better opinion appears to be that it secured to the State as great a revenue as could have been expected, at less expense to the cultivator than must have been the case under any other method of taxation.

The judicial reforms of Lord Cornwallis in India, though far short of what he had intended, were nevertheless of considerable value. In the vast district of the province of Bengal the jurisdiction of the Company in civil and criminal cases, as distinguished from that of the Supreme Court of the Crown, took its origin from a grant of Shah Alum which invested the government of Calcutta with the right of collecting the revenues of his empire. Their judicial functions were thus derived from fiscal institutions; the collectors of taxation held the office of judges; and, accordingly, a system of judicial procedure was established, which, being indirect and to a great extent grounded on fiction, was not only essentially imperfect, but naturally tended to create abuses. The double office of the judges gave temptations to corruption, retarded the due discharge of their business, and in cases connected with the revenue made them harsh and one-sided. Besides this, their whole machinery was slow and expensive; trials were held at uncertain and distant periods; and appeals were costly and difficult to obtain. Lord Cornwallis, who, as even Mr. Mill confesses, had a love for 'easy and cheap justice,' resolved to put an end to this state of things, and suc-

ceeded to an extent which reflects the highest honour on him. In all courts of the Company's jurisdiction he disjoined the fiscal from the judicial office, 'considering that in questions where the government was concerned a collector of revenue could never be impartial.' He established on a plan very analogous to that existing in England, a regular subordination of civil and criminal tribunals, each of which, except the highest, held its fixed circuits, and from each of which there was an immediate appeal to the one above it. In the lowest of these tribunals natives only presided; in the intermediate ones a mixture of natives and British judges; and from the highest of these an appeal lay to the Supreme Court of the Company, consisting of the Governor-general and Council. Besides this, Lord Cornwallis was desirous that this judicial system should administer a properly-digested jurisprudence; but although he was not able to carry this noble purpose into effect, he carried out several reforms in the municipal law of Bengal, which assimilated it more nearly than before to justice. 'Common sense and pure intention'—the words are those of Mr. Mill—'guided him in the good path' of legal reform throughout the vast district over which he presided; and of the many monuments raised in India by British wisdom and genius, perhaps this of Lord Cornwallis is not the least splendid. We might also notice his regulations as regards the police of Bengal; but as these have not been durable, they do not perhaps require much attention.

Lord Cornwallis, having been raised to a Marquisate for his services, returned to England in the beginning of 1794. During the next four years he was in a position as regards the public service less brilliant than that subsequently filled by the Duke of Wellington, but in some degree analogous to it. He was the most trusted general of England, and he was considered a statesman of eminent judgment and loyalty. He was now a regular supporter of Mr. Pitt's administration, and looked with indignation not unmingled with alarm at the tremendous drama of the French Revolution. The world had indeed been strangely altered since, twelve years before, he had given his sword to Rochambeau, and had watched the lilies fluttering at the mast-head of the 'Ville de Paris.' The American war had been fearfully avenged; the throne of Louis XVI. had been shattered into fragments; the old state of things in France had passed away amidst a chaos of anarchy and bloodshed; and a regicide republic, 'like Saturn devouring her own children,' and proclaiming ruin and death to the dynasties of Europe, was arming a million of fanatics for a desperate conflict. Nor was Great Britain free from the revolutionary spirit which was shaking

menacingly her institutions, and in Ireland was again reviving the fierce fires of a strife of race and religion. In 1793 France and England had commenced the struggle, and though at first the coalition of British, Prussians, and Austrians had obtained some successes, the levies of Pichegru and Jourdan were on the whole victorious in the Netherlands, while mistrust began to divide their enemies. The Austrians and Prussians were jealous of each other, and began to meditate treating separately with France; while the Duke of York, who commanded the British forces, was disregarded as a general, and preserved no authority. At this juncture Mr. Pitt proposed that Lord Cornwallis should become generalissimo of all the allied armies in the Netherlands, and Austria and Prussia assented to the plan, though probably with no intention of adhering to it. Notwithstanding the reluctance of the king, who was greatly offended at the removal of his son from his command, and a good deal of protestation on the part of Lord Cornwallis (which we must be permitted to construe in a rather ironical sense), all parties were ready to carry out the views of Mr. Pitt, when the evident lukewarmness of the allies prevented them from taking effect, and Lord Cornwallis from 'being hurried into this most embarrassing and dangerous situation' of succeeding to the great trust of Marlborough. Shortly afterwards, he was appointed Master-general of the Ordnance, and took an active and energetic part in preparing against the threatened invasion of 1795, which he appears to have contemplated with much apprehension. Upon the outbreak of a serious mutiny in the Bengal army in 1797, he consented to reassume the office of Governor-general, and was actually about to leave England, when ministers resolved to retain him at home in that perilous crisis of public affairs. He was one of the council which authorised the famous Bank Restriction, according to Sir A. Alison the greatest monument of the genius of Mr. Pitt; and upon the retirement of Lord Camden, was made, with less apparent reluctance than usual, Commander-in-chief and Lord-lieutenant of Ireland.

Lord Cornwallis arrived in Ireland at a period when the evil spirit of the French Revolution having entered into a society, perverted by misgovernment, and filled with corruption and elements of decay, had rent it asunder with fearful violence, and had left it in the convulsions of anarchy. Almost a hundred years had passed away since English jealousy and Irish intolerance had established in Ireland a political system, which had secured to her a destiny of discord and abasement. The objects of that system had been to maintain the supremacy of the mother-country over her Anglo-Irish colony, to confine the privileges of

full citizenship to a narrow oligarchy of Anglican Protestants, and to keep down in perpetual bondage the conquered Roman Catholic natives. These objects had been sedulously carried out in defiance of justice, reason, and good policy; and the result had been that, checked in her natural development, and divided into hostile races and sects, Ireland had become a source of weakness and of peril to the empire. Her legislature had been nominally set free by the events of 1782, was legally as independent as the senate that sat at Westminster Hall, and contained many men whose genius and patriotism threw the brightest lustre on this page of her history. But it had never lost the character of oligarchic and sectarian exclusiveness which bad laws had originally impressed upon it; and composed as it was of an aristocratic caste, without sympathy for the mass of the nation or responsibility to it, it was deeply tainted by corrupt influences, could seldom resist a determined or unscrupulous executive, was full of a narrow puritanic fanaticism, and usually opposed any really popular measures. Hence it was less a representative of the nation than the satellite of the crown and of a dominant class that looked with dislike on the classes beneath it; and while all the other institutions of the country were fashioned after a somewhat similar pattern, and raised a small minority to a factitious ascendancy in Church and State, the great body of the people of Ireland were excluded from the principal franchises of the Constitution, and were placed in a position of political and social degradation. The Established Church which Elizabeth had founded in the hope that it would include all Ireland within its pale, and which, originating in unjust spoliation, had for two centuries been propped up by anti-national laws, had degenerated into a mere fund of government patronage, entirely divorced from its primary purpose, and disliked on account of its past associations. The chief places in the state, in the army, and in the public departments, were reserved for the Episcopalian Protestant oligarchy, who, having since 1688 enjoyed five-sixths of the landed property of the country, were now its only recognised aristocracy, and were content to admit the virtual supremacy of the English parliament over their own, in consideration of a monopoly of power and place. To this class succeeded that of the Nonconformist Protestants—the descendants, in many instances, of Cromwell's Ironsides, and of emigrants from Scotland during the Stuart persecutions—a body formidable in its numbers and its democratic spirit, and imbued with an intense antipathy to 'Popery,' and yet, by a strange short-sightedness and perversity, shut out from many of the benefits of the State, and liable to the tithes of the Established Church, under a polity

whose avowed principle was its exclusive Protestantism. Beneath these, in occupation of three-fourths of the country, and resting in masses upon the soil, lay the Celtic and Roman Catholic nation of Ireland, for many years outlawed through every relation of life, but now admitted to just that measure of civil rights which made them long for a more complete emancipation. They composed the great majority of the people of Ireland, but having lost their natural leaders during three generations, and having been kept down for a century in hopeless servitude, they were still considered rather as a mass of Pariahs and Helots than as British subjects entitled to just government and protection.

The consequences of this state of things had been that, towards the close of the eighteenth century, the political condition of Ireland had become incompatible with good government, and her social relations were unkindly and jarring. Notwithstanding the efforts of a patriotic party, illustrious with many distinguished names, her parliament, engrossed by the nominees of the English ministry, or of the grasping native oligarchy, had refused to reform the basis of the representation, had opposed the full emancipation of the Roman Catholics, and on several occasions had obstructed most salutary imperial measures with the spirit of a narrow and bigoted fanaticism. The ecclesiastical polity of Ireland, with its monopoly of power, privileges, and taxation, was odious to all but those who benefited by it; and the complete predominance of the Episcopalian Protestant aristocracy was viewed and resented with bitter feelings by the Presbyterian and Roman Catholic sections of the nation. Nor were elements of evil less abundant in the social life of the country than in its political constitution. The domination of race and sect, prolonged and fostered by all the expedients of law and of government, had shown in Ireland its fatal results, in class hatreds and animosities of creed, in the elevation of a class into an insolent oligarchy, and in the moral degradation of a people. The nobility and landed gentry of Ireland at this period were undoubtedly a brilliant and high-spirited race, with their full share of the manly qualities, of the sense of honour, and of the frank hospitality which are the best characteristics of an aristocracy. But taught as they had been to consider themselves the natural pensioners of the State, they had few scruples as regards political corruption, while, having never been subject to any public opinion, and having inherited from their birth ideas of domination, they were for the most part arrogant and oppressive towards the great mass of the Irish Roman Catholic nation. This ill-fated race, held down in

became rapidly infected with Jacobinism; and although the leaders of the movement had no real sympathy with the Roman Catholic native of the south, the necessity of organizing a resistance to the British government induced them at length to court this alliance. It was impossible but that this oppressed and degraded race should have listened to doctrines which promised them relief from their thralldom, should have been strangely moved at the sight of the sudden fall of a splendid church and aristocracy, and should have eagerly caught at the prospect of renewing their old connection with the enemy of England. Thus, throughout a large portion of the country, a league, unnatural and portentous, was formed between interests, hitherto antagonistic, and the followers of Tone, and the flocks of the Roman Catholic priesthood, alike joined in a conspiracy to rise in rebellion. Opposed to them were the regular government, the dominant Protestant aristocracy with many of their dependents, and a large mass of the Protestant population whom no temptation could induce to coalesce with 'Popery,' and who eagerly watched for an opportunity to destroy it. At length in 1798, after many threatening symptoms, civil war broke out between these hostile parties; and although the absence of efficient aid from France prevented the issue from ever being doubtful, the rebellion was sufficiently formidable to throw the entire nation into convulsion. In several parts of the south and north of Ireland fierce masses of half-armed peasants banded themselves together, and committed excesses of frantic atrocity. More than once a French fleet put out to sea to aid the cause of the enemies of England, and to wrest a fair province for the great republic. The British government, forced to defend itself, but without an adequate regular army, was compelled to rely on its adherents in Ireland for support, and to quench insurrection in civil contest. Then ensued a short but terrible strife, in which the hostile races and sects of Ireland were again arrayed against each other, and pitilessly waged a war of extermination. It is needless to dwell upon the cruelties practised on either side; upon the burnings of Protestant houses, and the massacres of Protestant families; or upon the ruthless vengeance of military licence which everywhere pursued the Roman Catholic rebels. Victory was not long declaring itself with the government and the aristocracy, and it was followed up by acts of unrelenting severity, such as unusually deface the fearful triumphs of civil war. The broken masses of the rebels were hunted down without mercy by ferocious bands of half-disciplined yeomanry. Fanaticism, prejudice, and private revenge, too frequently were satiated

under the pretence of zealous loyalty; and crimes were perpetrated in the name of military duty which recalled to old generals the memories of Culloden. Martial law prevailed throughout the country, and daily sent its victims without a trial to the gibbet; the ordinary tribunals were shut up and neglected; and though parliament sat nominally at College Green, and affected to despatch the public business, Ireland was really in the hands of the army and the victorious Protestants, and civil government was, in fact, suspended. The constitution had been put down with the rebellion, and successful loyalty had established a reign of terror.

Lord Cornwallis was selected by Mr. Pitt to relieve Ireland from this rule of the sword, and at the same time, if possible, to accomplish the Union, the opposition to which recent events had concurred to diminish. He gained both objects in the brief space of three years; and although his colleague, Lord Castlereagh, must share with him the merit, and though to some extent he acted upon the inspiration of others, his Irish policy deserves equal attention and commendation. When he reached Dublin the rebels had just been routed at Vinegar Hill, and throughout the military districts into which the country had been divided the saturnalia of rapine and license were being celebrated. Though everything like open war was now over, the Highlands of Wicklow and of Wexford were still infested with marauders, who occasionally made incursions upon the loyalist inhabitants, and returned to their fastnesses laden with plunder. At the same time a descent from France was repeatedly threatened; and at head-quarters the opinion prevailed that whenever the sails from Brest should make their appearance, three-fourths of Ireland would rise again in rebellion. In this state of affairs the thirst for vengeance, the dread of invasion, and the vulgar lust for pillage and outrage urged the regular army and the yeomanry and militia of Ireland to commit acts of the grossest cruelty; and the vanquished race were again trodden down under foot as when, one hundred and fifty years before, they were forced under the yoke of Cromwell. Roman Catholic places of worship were recklessly destroyed, upon the pretence that they had been receptacles of sedition.¹ 'Popery' was everywhere identified with rebellion; and Roman Catholic houses were searched, and Roman Catholic peasants were slaughtered without any redress being possible to the sufferers. Men still living can tell how villages were sacked, how cottages were burned,

¹ See Lord Cornwallis to General Ross, July 24, 1798 [Vol. ii. 369], and same to same, Nov. 16, 1799 [Vol. iii. 145].

how troops of victims were hurried off to execution and torture, whenever the English dragoons and the yeomenry of the north made their forays through the terrified country. Nor can it be doubted but that these atrocities were, if not encouraged, at least not repressed by the military authorities in Ireland. It was thought necessary by some that an example should be made, and that the insurrection should be extinguished by such means as Claverhouse had used against the Covenanters of Scotland.¹ Others were only too eager for an opportunity to dye their swords in Papist blood, or at least to prove to the government that Roman Catholic Ireland was essentially rebellious, and should again be subjected to Protestant domination. The results, of course, were, that terror and despair kept alive the dying embers of the insurrection; that, so long as a war of extermination continued, the pacification of the country was made impossible, and that the discipline of the victorious forces had become so relaxed that they ceased to wear the aspect of a regular army.

Lord Cornwallis saw at once the necessity of bringing this state of things to a conclusion, and of attempting to staunch the bloody wounds of civil warfare. It is highly to his honour that his policy not only was successful, but that he stood foremost and almost alone among his colleagues, in insisting upon making it a policy of mercy and conciliation.² He checked instantly the excesses of the Protestant yeomanry and militia 'who took the lead in rapine and murder,' and reminded him of 'the loyalists in America, only much more numerous, and a thousand times more ferocious.' He repressed with stern but just severity 'the burning of houses by the yeomen or any other persons who delighted in the amusement, the floggings for the purpose of extorting confession, and the free quarters which comprehended universal rape and robbery throughout the country.' He laboured sedulously to restore discipline in the army, and although this was not at once accomplished, and the disgraceful 'Race of Castlebar' attests the state of inefficiency into which it had fallen, he gradually brought it into better order by a system of strict and vigilant superintendence. He did all in his power to put an end to the martial law, 'which he found the only law in

¹ Lord Cornwallis to the Duke of Portland, June 28, 1798 [Vol. ii. 355], same to same [Vol. ii. 358].

² Mr. Pitt, though anxious to connect the Union with Catholic Emancipation, had still in 1798 begun to vacillate as regards the latter measure. See his letter to Lord Cornwallis, Nov. 17, 1798 [Vol. ii. 439]. As regards the cruel policy advocated towards the rebels by the Irish authorities, see the second and third volumes of this work *passim*.

town and country,' and to revive the ordinary administration of justice; and though the state trials of the rebels of 1798 were not marked by lenity, or even by equity, there can be no doubt that this change was in the right direction. By these means before a year had passed he had subdued to a considerable extent the evil elements which were keeping Ireland in rebellion; and he had taught the victorious Protestant party that they, too, were amenable to law and government. As regards the rebels his conduct was equally just and moderate. He judged rightly that their resistance would cease without openly attacking them; that 'the feeble outrages, burnings, and murders which they were committing' were merely acts of retaliation; and, accordingly, soon after his accession to office, he proclaimed an amnesty of their offences. This had at once the desired effect; and although Roman Catholic Ireland, as he observed, was not made 'loyal' by it, she soon became submissive and tranquil. To a large body of state prisoners who confessed their share in the insurrection he extended a conditional freedom; and though this act of mercy was much condemned at the time, there can be no doubt of its real wisdom. On the whole, notwithstanding a bitter opposition in Ireland, and even several remonstrances from the British cabinet, he steadily pursued towards the conquered rebels 'a policy of amnesty, not of extirpation;' and in a short time had the consolation of reporting to the Duke of Portland that Ireland was once more under the control of civil government. For this lenient and most admirable conduct he was vilified by the Protestant oligarchy of the country in terms of unmeasured reprobation; and he had the honour of being characterized by the notorious Dr. Duigenan 'as an object not only of disgust, but of abhorrence to all loyal men.' And yet, were it not that the mercifulness of his Irish administration is placed beyond all question by these 'Memoirs,' the bloody list of punishments to which he was obliged to assent in the short space of six months, might have induced us to form a contrary conclusion. After the battle of Vinegar Hill had been won, and the insurrection, in fact, had terminated, eighty-one rebels suffered on the scaffold and four hundred and eighteen were transported for life.

No sooner had Ireland been partly pacified than the government began to urge the project of the Union. The alarm and the confusion created by the rebellion had operated strongly in favour of the measure, and the legislature of England now cordially supported it. Opinions in Ireland inclined the same way, but, as might have been expected, were considerably divided. These volumes, indeed, conclusively disprove the assertion of

Sir Jonah Barrington and other writers that the Union was essentially unpopular in Ireland, and was the mere result of intimidation and corruption. It is plain that, even at the close of 1798,¹ there was little sympathy in Ireland for the constitution of 1782, and that the idea of a legislative incorporation with Great Britain was not unwelcome to the majority of all classes in the nation. A calculation made by Lord Cornwallis in 1800—the accuracy of which we see no reason to doubt²—shows that the supporters of the Union at that time enormously preponderated in point of property; and it is certain that the trading interests of the principal towns in Ireland, except Dublin, were also of the same opinion. As regards the great body of the Roman Catholic nation, they had been so broken down by the havoc of the rebellion, that at present they looked at politics with indifference; but although some of them, amongst whom Mr. O'Connell was conspicuous, preferred the existing state of things to a connection with the 'Saxon,' on the whole they inclined feebly towards the Union.³ It is, indeed, not a little remarkable, and is a melancholy proof how they had learned to dread the English government, that their assent was not much more cordial, and that they did not eagerly join in overturning a polity from which they had experienced little save oppression. On the other hand, a formidable opposition to the project still existed, although the events of the last few years had weakened it considerably, and the time had past when it could stop parliamentary discussion on the subject. The mild administration of Lord Cornwallis, who was known to be a friend of Mr. Pitt, and was generally supposed to be an advocate of Catholic Emancipation, caused the Protestant oligarchy to dread that their ascendancy would terminate with the Union; and this was quite sufficient to array the more bigoted of them against it.⁴ The great boroughmongering peers who for more than a century had made the Irish House of Commons a market-overt in which they sold the votes of their nominees for power or patronage, were, in part, adverse to the closing of the sources of corruption. A number of placemen in the same assembly naturally opposed any measure that might curtail their pensions; and the really patriotic party of Ireland, many of whom had achieved the independence of 1782, who had gained respect and renown for their parliamentary efforts, and who still believed in the possibility of reforming Ireland within

¹ This point is clearly established by this work. See Lord Cornwallis to General Ross, July 2, 1798 [Vol. iii., 111], and especially same to same, Nov. 7, 1799 [Vol. iii., 143].

² Vol. iii., 224. The proportion is about three to one.

³ Vol. iii., 143.

⁴ Vol. iii., 104—113.

herself, resented the notion of the extinction of their native senate.¹ The large majority of the Irish bar were also against the Union; and so were the merchants and shopkeepers of Dublin,² who believed that their trade and profits would decline if the metropolis were to lose its local legislature.

In this state of things it is perhaps to be regretted that Mr. Pitt did not openly make Catholic Emancipation a condition of the Union, and did not permit Lord Cornwallis to gain the hearty support of Roman Catholic Ireland by distinctly pledging the government to such a policy. This conduct would have been consistent with the real views of the minister; would have been just, liberal, and magnanimous; and, perhaps, by combining a strong mass of opinion in Ireland in favour of the Union, would have rendered unnecessary the means that were taken to obtain it. It was not, however, adopted, in consequence probably of the obstinacy of the king, who hated any scheme of Roman Catholic concession; and Lord Cornwallis was left to carry out the great measure without having secured for it a moral aid which it should have received, and against a strong though discordant opposition. Though the government and parliament of England and the majority of the Irish nation were more or less in favour of the Union, that opposition in the Irish parliament was very powerful, and as, in the mass, it was composed of irresponsible nominees, and it was not encountered by a strong pressure from without, it is obvious that there was but one method to subdue it. That method, in the language of Lord Castlereagh, was to 'buy up the fee-simple of corruption,' by giving a large price to its actual owners, to extinguish the Irish parliament, like Tarpeia, under the weight of bribery; and, although the splendid and exaggerated invectives of Grattan and Plunket have placed this policy in the worst light, we should not forget that it was only a repetition, on a somewhat larger scale, of what always had been the policy of the English government towards Ireland,³ and that it has conferred inestimable advantages on the empire. Such considerations as these are absolutely necessary in forming a just estimate of the conduct of Lords Cornwallis and Castlereagh as regards this phase of the Union. It is easy to echo against them the clamour of defunct Irish patriots that they were merely gross and unscrupulous agents in a corrupt compact. It is easy to represent the moribund senate of 1800 as an assembly in which baseness triumphed over patriotism. But truth requires it to be

¹ Vol. ii., 445.

² Ibid.

³ See Grattan's speeches *passim* from 1782 downwards. In fact, the connection between England and Ireland was kept up after 1782 by this bad influence.

said, that if evil means were employed to effect the Union, they were employed in the ultimate interest of political purity, and that a better purchase was never made than that of the Irish opposition. As it is, these volumes afford good proof that the amount of pecuniary influence used to accomplish the measure has been enormously over-estimated;¹ and we need scarcely say that, to the high spirit of Lord Cornwallis, this business appeared peculiarly offensive.² His letters are full of disgust at the share he felt compelled to take in it; and we may for once believe that he was really sincere in hating his place at the head of a government which, for a time, was a broker of corruption.

On the 22nd January, 1799, the question of the Union was brought forward, for the first time, in both houses of the Irish Parliament. Our belief is, that at this period the greater part of the nation was in favour of the measure; but on the first division in the House of Commons, the majority for government was one only, and on a subsequent one, in which the principle was incidentally discussed, the balance inclined in favour of the opposition. During the ensuing year both parties prepared for the great contest which it was known would take place in the next session. The government, with all the vast resources of the administration, had of course the largest fund of influence to draw on, and promises of peerages, pensions, and other kinds of favours were held forth as inducements to support the measure. The bar, too, and the press were liberally bribed, but evidently not at all to the extent that has been supposed; and the Lord-lieutenant and Chief-secretary exerted themselves strenuously to conciliate or disarm opposition. On the other hand, the anti-unionists were equally active in procuring assistance by any means whatever; and probably an impartial estimate would prove that they were not at all behindhand in circulating the wages of corruption. After an exciting struggle of nearly twelve months, during which several votes had openly been transferred to the government, several seats had been vacated to give room to unionists, several of the seceding members of 1798 had resolved to re-enter parliament, and a variety of petitions for or against the measure had been procured, the Articles of Union were brought in by Lord Castlereagh, and passed the House of Commons by majorities of from forty to fifty. The debates on

¹ Vol. iii., 151. The sum actually spent in bribery appears to have been about £10,000. About £1,500,000 was distributed in pensions and compensation for boroughs, and several peerages were conferred for supporting the Union. But this latter species of reward was not direct corruption.

² Vol. iii., *passim*.

these occasions were long and acrimonious, but were characterized by a display of reasoning and eloquence which at least showed that Ireland was not wanting in parliamentary ability, and which cast a fitful splendour over the spectacle of a senate perishing by its own volition. On the side of the government the ablest speaker was probably Mr. Smith, afterwards Baron of the Exchequer in Ireland, and one of the soundest and most brilliant of her numerous legal worthies. But the brunt of the battle fell on Lord Castlereagh; and although at this, as at other times, he was deficient as an orator, his strong will, unflinching boldness, and admirable management, made him prominent alike among friends and adversaries. The chief orators of the opposition were Grattan and Plunket; and the lustrous rhetoric of the one, and the powerful reasoning of the other, were perhaps never more brilliant or striking. It is gratifying to reflect that the genius and patriotism of these great men were not lost to Ireland with the extinction of her senate, and that subsequently they achieved a reputation and obtained an authority in the Imperial Parliament which made them of real advantage to their country. In March, 1800, the articles of Union finally passed the Irish Parliament, and on the 7th of June a bill in compliance with them became at last the law of the land. At the time there was much real and interested opposition to the measure, and for many years afterwards the phantom of Repeal was conjured up by Irish agitators and sentimentalists; but the candid inquirer will perhaps now admit, not only that the Union was a political necessity, and has been of the greatest advantage to the empire, but that very great misconception has prevailed with regard to the circumstances under which it was accomplished.

Many years before the commencement of this century,¹ Adam Smith had advocated the Irish Union, on the ground that it would consolidate into one nation the hostile races and sects of Ireland. It is deeply to be regretted that it was an imperfect measure, and that it was not accompanied by the wise and magnanimous policy of relieving Roman Catholic Ireland from religious disabilities, and of securing a state provision for her clergy. These volumes, indeed, satisfactorily prove that it was not associated, as has been said, with a gross breach of public faith,² and that neither Mr. Pitt nor Lord Cornwallis ever held

¹ 'Wealth of Nations,' B. 5, chap. iii.

² Vol. iii. 52—161. In fact, some of the Opposition wished to obtain the support of the Roman Catholics by a pledge that they would henceforward advocate their emancipation.

out hopes to the Irish Roman Catholics that the extinction of the Irish Parliament would inaugurate a new system of government for them. But it is certain that Mr. Pitt felt the necessity for this concurrence; that he knew well that without it 'the reign of proscription and exclusion would not terminate in Ireland;' and Lord Cornwallis recorded his distinct opinion that the Union by itself was merely a half measure.¹ The events of the last sixty years, during the first thirty of which a modified Protestant ascendancy still continued in Ireland, which witnessed the tardy extortion of Catholic Emancipation in 1829, not as a free concession, but as the spoil of agitation, and in which the Roman Catholic priesthood of Ireland have risen into an anti-English and tribunitian power, unsupported by the State, and adverse to it, confirm the justice of these conclusions; and although Mr. Pitt and Lord Cornwallis alike showed their sincerity by resigning when they found that George III. was immovable as regards the Catholic question, we think that neither of them, and Mr. Pitt especially, should have given any countenance to the cabinet of Mr. Addington. The vacillation of Mr. Pitt upon this subject deprived the empire of many of the benefits of the Union. It retarded for many years the great object contemplated by Adam Smith—the equalisation of the different nations existing in Ireland; it permitted the entire generation of Irish Roman Catholics who were in their prime in 1800 to descend to their graves with the fetters of intolerance on them; it committed one-third of Great Britain during the struggle with Napoleon to the domination of an oppressive oligarchy; and it sowed the seeds of democratic turbulence, and of sacerdotal despotism in a large portion of the dominions of the English crown. It is impossible to exclude Lord Cornwallis altogether from a share in this censure, but of course he is blameable in a far less degree; and, even with all its imperfections, the great measure of which he was the principal author has been of inestimable benefit to Ireland. From the first it weakened the tyranny of the Protestant oligarchy, and secured a better system of government for the Roman Catholic natives. It made the enactment of Catholic Emancipation a mere question of time. It directed the attention of British statesmen to the social condition of a country in which misgovernment had entailed a fearful mass of material evils; and to it may be ultimately traced that noble economic emancipation of Ireland which has been the result of the last ten years. Such measures as the Irish Poor Law, as the Encumbered Estates Act, as the Irish Church Temporalities Act,

¹ Vol. iii., 250—306.

could never have passed in any conceivable Irish Parliament; and the objects for which Grattan appealed in vain to the senate of the Corrys and Duigenans—‘the moulding and consolidating of a nation’—have, in part at least, been accomplished under the auspices of English statesmen at Westminster.

Lord Cornwallis, having resigned with Mr. Pitt, in consequence of the king’s conduct as regarded the Catholic question, left Ireland in May, 1801.¹ He carried away with him the sincere good wishes of the Irish Roman Catholics, to whom his favourable inclinations were known, and who were grateful for his just and mild administration, and the bitter dislike of the dominant faction, and of a large section of the really independent patriotic party who resented his furtherance of the Union. By the Orangemen of the north he was nicknamed ‘Croppy Corny,’² on account of his supposed Roman Catholic sympathies; and he was associated by such men as Grattan and Plunket with the downfall of the parliamentary constitution of their country. These volumes silence all imputations of this kind, and attest the justice, wisdom, and moderation of his government of Ireland at a period of great difficulty and national peril. He survived the Union more than four years, and we think that his public career would have been more illustrious had he declined to accept any employment from any Cabinet that did not make the Catholic question a *sine quâ non* of its policy. But on this point he was certainly not scrupulous, and in November, 1801, he was selected as Plenipotentiary of England, to negotiate the short-lived peace of Amiens. He had always augured badly as to the issue of the war, and had disapproved of Lord Grenville’s anti-gallican feelings in 1800; and his appointment on this occasion is clear evidence that Mr. Addington’s administration were sincerely anxious for the peace. It is needless to comment upon an unfortunate treaty which lasted only a few months, and every article of which has long ago been cancelled by the great settlement of 1815. So far as he was concerned, Lord Cornwallis promoted the peace, and gave satisfaction to the king and Lord Hawkesbury. Soon after this time his health, which appears never to have been very strong, began to show symptoms of decay; and he retired to Culford with a conviction that his long public services at last had terminated. This, however, was not to be. For the third time he was chosen Governor-general of India in 1805. Though worn out, and almost dying, he accepted the important trust, and arrived at Calcutta in July, 1805; but his feeble energies soon

¹ Vol. iii., 288. See also Plowden’s History *in loco*.

² ‘Croppy’ was the epithet applied to the Irish Roman Catholic rebels.

yielded to the climate of India ; and having reached Ghazipore on the 27th of September, he expired there a few days afterwards. 'Thus,' says Sir John Malcolm, 'closed the life of this distinguished nobleman, whose memory will be revered as long as the sacred attributes of virtue and patriotism shall command the approbation of mankind.'

In looking back at the life of Lord Cornwallis, as it is disclosed to us in these volumes, we think that his public services hitherto have scarcely been justly estimated, and that his character henceforward will stand higher than it stood before. It was never doubted that he was a nobleman of great personal courage, of much experience in affairs, and of perfect integrity. He has also not been without panegyrists who have praised his government of India and of Ireland. But, in common opinion, his reputation as a general has been associated with the disastrous issue of the American war ; and the merit of his campaign against Tippoo Saib has been forgotten in the fall of Seringapatam. His social and judicial reforms in India, especially the permanent settlement of Bengal, have been condemned by the more popular of our historians ; and in Ireland his lord-lieutenancy is chiefly remembered as connected with the horrors of 1798, and with the more humiliating incidents of the Union. These volumes restore him to his true position as a soldier, not indeed brilliant or fortunate, but prudent, calculating, and intrepid, and as a statesman who combined great sagacity with a singular love of justice and liberality of policy. They relieve him from all blame as regards the capitulation of Yorktown, do justice to his heroism and conduct in his Indian wars, place his civil government of India in a fairer light than that in which Mr. Mill and others behold it, and, above all, attest the wisdom, the generosity, and the equity of his memorable administration in Ireland. They also show that—with certain obvious defects, such as a somewhat desponding and hesitating disposition, and too great an eagerness for office—the private character of Lord Cornwallis was of that kind which entitles him to rank high among the worthies of England. Mr. Ross must have sincere satisfaction in reflecting that his labours have not only elucidated several passages in history, but have raised a monument equally memorable and trustworthy to one with whom he is connected by many associations.

MODERN GERMAN PHILOSOPHY.

Modern German Philosophy: its Characteristics, Tendencies, and Results. By J. D. Morell, M.A. London and Manchester, 1856.

CAN German philosophy be made intelligible to English readers? Judging merely from the success of most of the attempts with which we are acquainted, we should be disposed to answer this question at once and decisively in the negative. Indeed it seems to be generally admitted, that the majority of German philosophical speculations are, to use the words of a recent writer, 'decidedly repugnant to the English understanding;'—that, whatever may be the affinity of the two nations in other respects, there is in the domain of philosophy, as the Germans understand the term, a great gulf fixed between them, over which it is hopeless to attempt any communication. The English palate may take kindly enough to Bavarian beer; it may even, by judicious training, be brought to relish sauer-kraut; and without any training at all, there is international sympathy in the mutual inhalation of tobacco. But between the laborious induction which traces all ideas to sensation and reflection, and the 'high priori' method which deduces a theory of the universe from the innocent assumption that A is A, or the bold paradox that A is equally not A, what concord or fellowship can be hoped for? What can an Englishman do with the absolute ego which posits its own existence, or the identity of identity and non-identity? From the former what fruit can be expected, beyond the produce gathered by the logical Clown in 'Twelfth Night:' 'For as the old hermit of Prague, that never saw pen and ink, very wittily said to a niece of king Gorboduc, *That that is, is*; so I, being master parson, am master parson; for what is that but that, and is but is?' While the latter startling axiom, if it meets with any notice at all, can hardly be expected to receive a more lenient sentence than old Hobbes (not an unfair specimen of the ordinary English mind in metaphysical speculations) pronounced on a philosophical technicality of another kind: 'It is found only in school-divinity, as a word of art, or rather as a word of craft, to amaze and puzzle the laity.'

But, on the other hand, the argument of Shylock may be urged, *mutatis mutandis*, in favour of an opposite view of the

question. 'Hath not a German eyes? hath not a German hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions? fed with the same food, hurt with the same weapons, subject to the same diseases, healed by the same means, warmed and cooled by the same winter and summer, as an Englishman is?' With all these indications of a common humanity, there must surely be some discoverable channel by which a mental communication may be carried on between the two nations—some touch of that nature which makes the whole world kin, traceable even among the clouds and fogs of Teutonic metaphysics. However distant from each other, the English and the German courses of thought may be in their final development, there must be some common point in human nature from which both diverge; and this point, if it can be ascertained, will serve as a post of observation from which we may contemplate the more remote positions of each.

It is no disparagement to the merits of Mr. Morell's essays, the title of which, in compliance with the usual custom, has been prefixed to this article, if we say that they are not calculated, as indeed they were not intended, to fill up the chasm which we have mentioned as separating the thinkers of the two countries from each other. They are well suited to give an English reader a general idea of the problems to be solved; but they do not attempt to throw light on the method of solution. They exhibit in a brief outline the manner in which such questions might have been treated, had they been dealt with by English writers; but they convey little or no information as to the manner in which they actually have been treated by Germans. The more elaborate 'History of Modern Philosophy' by the same author, though on the whole the best work of the kind in our language, is least satisfactory in this portion of its subject, principally from falling into the opposite extreme. It is too apt to give abstracts of German arguments and translations of German expressions, in a form to which an English reader can attach no definite meaning. This is especially the case with regard to Schelling and Hegel, the two philosophers whose modes of thought are most removed from an Englishman's point of view, and whose reasonings will least bear a literal exhibition in another language. Our own attempt will perhaps not be more successful, especially as our limits allow us only a very brief outline of the principal problems and methods.

There are probably few Englishmen who, whatever may be their views upon other questions, would hesitate to give their assent to two propositions, as sufficiently self-evident to need no

proof and to admit of no refutation. These are, first, that the things which I see with my eyes and touch with my hands do really exist; and, secondly, that I, who see and touch them, really exist also. They feel instinctively that neither the perceiver nor the perceived is created in and by the act of perception; that the table on which my hand is resting existed before I touched it, and will continue to exist afterwards; and that I, the toucher, am likewise not indebted for my existence to the mere act of touching. This is a dictum of John Bull's common sense which no logic can wrest from him; and even in his most meditative moods he would think little enough of any system of philosophy which does not preserve intact these two primary convictions.

Not so the German. The very authority to which the Englishman appeals in support of his instinctive beliefs, is regarded by his transcendental kinsman as an impostor and a simpleton. That which Mr. Bull calls *common sense*, and venerates as an oracle of practical wisdom, Herr Tiefsinn styles *understanding*, and bestows upon it the contemptuous epithets of *coarse*, *vulgar*, *narrow*, *uncritical*, and so forth. Nor has he more respect for the dictum itself than for the faculty which asserts it. If there is one word in the whole vocabulary of speculation which a philosophic Teuton regards with supreme contempt and dislike, as the source of all that is shallow and all that is erroneous in human thought, that word is *dualism*. And common sense, in affirming the simultaneous existence of myself and of the object which I perceive, is unquestionably guilty of dualism. The Pythagoreans placed all good in unity, and all evil in plurality: with a German, the root of all mischief is the number two. As restless as Haman at the sight of Mordecai at the king's gate, the Teutonic thinker finds no 'stand-point' for his speculation, so long as a pertinacious *Nicht-Ich*, or *not myself* is permitted to dispute the claim of his personality to the monarchy of all he surveys.

For this is the distribution of the universe in which German philosophy especially rejoices—into *myself* and *everything else*; *das Ich* and *das Nicht Ich*, the *Ego* and the *Non-ego*. And quaint as the nomenclature may sound to unaccustomed ears, the division is unquestionably the most trenchant and the most philosophical of all that have hitherto been invented for speculative purposes. *Soul* and *body*, *mind* and *matter*, involve a tacit assumption as to the nature of the two things contrasted, and possibly leave room for the supposition of a *tertium quid*, intermediate between the two. *Subject* and *object* labour under the disadvantage of a historical ambiguity, and do not sufficiently

distinguish between a man thinking about himself and a man thinking about something else. But between *self* and *not-self* there is a sharp and undeniable contradiction. Be *I* what I may, according to the various definitions of philosophers—a rational animal, a biped without feathers, a system of nerves, a bundle of sensations, a combination of soul and body—one thing at least is indisputable: I am myself; and the rest of the universe (provided always that there is an universe and a rest of it) is not myself.

Thus the highest aim of speculative philosophy, according to the German conception, is to reduce to unity these twin factors of all human consciousness. The manner in which this reduction is to be effected admits of many varieties of theory; and from these differences adverse systems have arisen; but that it must be effected somehow, is admitted by all philosophers worthy of the name. 'Whether the dog devour the hog, or the hog the dog,' said the *insouciant* Sultan, calmly surveying the battles of his Christian neighbours, 'is all one to the true believer.' Whether the ego annihilate the non-ego, or *vice versa*, or whether both be swallowed up by some superior principle, is of little consequence, provided only that the swallowing be so complete as to leave one in the place of two. Anything short of this is dualism; and philosophy has declared that dualism is an abomination.

We are now, perhaps, in a position to understand the meaning of a word which figures perpetually in German metaphysical writings and treatises thereanent—the *Absolute*. So long as the act of knowledge implies a real distinction between the person knowing and the thing known, so long knowledge is only possible in the form of a *relation* between two things, each of which may exist independently of the other. 'The objects which I am capable of knowing exist whether I know them or not; and my knowledge is real, only in so far as it corresponds to the actual constitution of the thing known. But, again, my own mind has an existence independent of any particular act of knowing; and such an act can only be produced by the exertion of my faculties according to the laws of my mental constitution. Hence, the relation which constitutes knowledge must be regarded as a derivative result, dependent on some prior reality or realities. To admit *realities* is dualism: a true unitarian philosophy is therefore compelled to assume that the things related are but opposite manifestations of one and the same primary existence; and this existence is the Absolute.

But to this assumption common sense demurs with an awkward question. The relation which is thus summarily to

be got rid of is that by which all human knowledge is constituted. Granting, then, the existence of the supposed higher reality, how can such a reality be known to exist? For the knowledge of its existence, as out of relation, implies the annihilation of one of the elements without which no knowledge is possible. Either the *ego* has devoured the *non-ego*, or the *non-ego* has devoured the *ego*, or, like the Kilkenny cats, they have devoured each other, and the Absolute is the residuary tail. How, then, can philosophy attain to a knowledge of the Absolute, when the very assumption of the Absolute necessarily implies either that there is nothing to be known, or no one to know it?

The most obvious answer for philosophy to make, and the one least offensive to the interrogator, common sense, is, 'I am the Absolute; and that of which I am conscious is myself.' There is something so astounding in the paradox of commencing a system of thought with the annihilation of the thinker, *Cogito, ergo non sum*, that it is not surprising that philosophy should attempt every other subterfuge before adopting this last desperate remedy of 'committing suicide,' like St. Patrick's serpent, 'to save itself from slaughter.' If, then, philosophy is not possible without the existence of a philosopher, and if philosophy, to be worthy of the name, is bound to reduce all existences to one, it follows, as a necessary consequence, that this one existence must be the philosopher himself.

Thus we are introduced to the earliest form of the modern German philosophy of the Absolute,—that of Fichte. The reasoning to which he has recourse, though somewhat different in form from that on which we have hitherto proceeded, will be found to be in substance very much the same. Philosophy, he argues, must commence with an assumption, which, both in its form and in its matter, is self-evident and independent of all prior conditions. Self-evidence in form there is no difficulty in finding. The first law of all thought, the primary condition without which all subsequent reasoning falls to the ground, is the assumption that everything is itself, or $A = A$. This is undeniably a proposition which needs no higher principle to justify it. It is simple; for it postulates only one existence: it is absolute; for it implies no necessary relation to any other assertion. But though thus satisfactory in form, it requires some further justification as regards its matter. *A*, in the above statement, may stand for any existence whatever, original or derived; and the fact of any real object existing to correspond is not yet guaranteed. If any *A* exists, assuredly it exists as *A*; but how are we to convert the *if* into a categorical as-

section? To obtain material as well as formal certainty, we must find an A which undoubtedly exists; and this A is to be found in *myself*. For in thinking that A is A, I, the thinker, unquestionably exist. We have thus a proposition absolute and simple in its matter as well as in its form; and the principle, which in its general statement was a merely logical formula, has now acquired a metaphysical significance.

But common sense is still not satisfied. 'How,' asks this obstinate unbeliever, 'can I be the Absolute? I am certain that I did not exist from all eternity: I am certain, also, that I did not, at any period of time, make myself. It is clear, therefore, that my existence must be dependent on some higher cause; and if philosophy insists on asserting the contrary, philosophy is a lying rascal.' To meet this objection, Fichte's system introduces a distinction. The *ego* which is identical with the Absolute, is not the *ego* whose existence is manifested in consciousness; for consciousness has many modes, and each separate mode can only be regarded as the attribute of some higher substance. I am conscious, for instance, of a thought, of a feeling, of a desire; but I am conscious, also, that I am not identical with any one nor with all of these; though I become conscious of my own existence only as manifested in some of these special modes. Thus the *I* of consciousness implies a higher *I*, neither a thinking *I*, nor a feeling *I*, nor a desiring *I*, but an 'I-by-myself-I;' and this *I* is the Absolute.

Under this assumption, the question 'What am I out of consciousness?' or 'What was I before the commencement of consciousness?' has no force, and, indeed, no meaning. The *self* about whom I can ask such a question, or, indeed, about whom I can think at all, is only the self manifested in consciousness. By supposing a self out of consciousness, it is at once implied that we can no longer think about it or ask any question concerning it. Undoubtedly the self of which I am conscious exists only by the existence of consciousness; but that very existence implies the existence of a higher self, of which I never am conscious and never can be.

Having thus laid down as a condition of the Absolute, that it is unknown to consciousness, the rest of the demonstration is encumbered with no further difficulties. Common sense has not a word more to say; for common sense can only deal with that of which it is conscious. The rest of the deduction is a mere series of verbal sequences, in which thought has no share. As Mephistopheles advises Faust—

'Haltet euch an Worte,
Dann geht ihr durch die sichere Pforte
Zum Tempel der Gewissheit ein.'

Fichte admits in express terms that *self* or the *ego* can only be an object of thought in and by consciousness; yet he proceeds immediately to lay down the laws of development of the absolute self beyond consciousness, which, by his own confession, we never think about at all. His first formula, ' $A = A$,' or 'the *ego* posits itself,' may, subject to the above explanations, be interpreted to mean, 'the fact of a necessary thought implies the existence not only of a thinker, but of a real substance, capable of becoming a thinker, and learning its own existence by thinking.'

But this absolute self, being originally free and independent of any particular mode of consciousness, must be determined to consciousness by some cause acting upon it. Hence, the *ego*, in becoming conscious of its own existence, is compelled at the same time to assume, though it is not directly conscious of, the existence of another reality upon which its consciousness depends. This reality is called the *non-ego*; and the principle upon which it is assumed is technically expressed in the formula ' $A \neq A$,' or 'the *ego* implies a *non-ego*.'

But this supposed *non-ego*, though in its first aspect it is an independent reality acting upon the *ego*, yet appears, on further examination, to be a product of the *ego* itself. It is by an act of my own thought that I am compelled to assume its existence, in order to account for the fact of my becoming conscious of myself. Beyond the necessity of my own thought, I have no guarantee of its existence. Hence arises the third principle of Fichte's philosophy: 'The *ego* and the *non-ego* are both posited by the *ego* itself.' In other words, 'the conscious self, and the object implied by consciousness, both owe their existence to the fact that the absolute or unconscious self becomes conscious.'

Hence we are enabled to reduce to one principle the apparent opposition between the theories of universal necessity and absolute freedom, which, at first sight, seems to make speculative and practical philosophy each the contradictory of the other. Speculative philosophy endeavours to reduce all existence to a dependence upon one absolute principle or cause. Practical philosophy is compelled to assume that moral obligation implies the freedom and therefore the independence of the moral agent. The two are reconciled by identifying the absolute cause with myself, the free agent. Speculative philosophy is employed in the examination of the *non-ego*, which manifests itself as a cause limiting and determining the acts of the *ego*. Practical philosophy resolves this determination into a higher freedom, by assuming that the *non-ego* is the product of the *ego* itself. Practical philosophy is thus, in the order of nature, prior to speculative; for freedom (not, however, the freedom of consciousness)

is the first and highest assumption of philosophy. The *ego* strives to realize completely its own absolute freedom; and practical philosophy is the result of the effort.

It seems, at first sight, impossible either to establish or to refute a system which starts from the assumption of an object of which we never are and never can be conscious. If we know nothing about the absolute self at all, how can we say whether the description which the philosopher gives of it is true or false? But, in truth, the refutation admits of an easier method than the establishment. For we may refute a theory, even without understanding it, if the language in which it is conveyed is inconsistent with itself. The rules of logic are as applicable to signs without meaning as to thoughts represented by significant terms. If a man asserts, in the course of an argument, that A is B, and also that A is not B, we may convict him out of his own mouth, even though we have no knowledge of the objects which A and B represent. And thus we are at liberty to criticise Fichte's theory of the absolute self, though that absolute self, by his own admission, is not and cannot be an object of thought. For there is a self-contradiction in the terms of the theory, which no explanation can remove. The absolute self is described as being at the same time simple and complex, one and many, free and constrained. It is a simple subject, having no attributes or modifications; yet it contains within itself a necessary law of self-development. It is the one solitary principle of all things; yet it is acted upon by something distinct from itself. It is absolutely free; yet, in order to realize this freedom, it is compelled to place over against itself, first, a real not-self, and, secondly, a phenomenal world of the objects of consciousness.

The objections might be carried further, if we were to examine the doctrine, not merely in its principles, but in its consequences. The absolute self, the one primitive existence, takes the place of the Deity; and the philosopher is thus reduced to the alternatives of either Atheism or Autotheism—he has no God, or he is God to himself. And to one of these alternatives Fichte was actually driven, when the iron necessity of his logic forced from him the memorable assertion: ‘The moral order of the universe is itself God; we need no other, and we can comprehend no other.’

It may perhaps contribute to throw some additional light on the meaning and purpose of this method of speculation, if we turn our attention for a few moments to its historical position and the circumstances which gave rise to it. The philosophy of Fichte professed to be a further development of the prin-

ciples of Kant. It is true that the master by no means admitted the validity of his disciple's inferences; but this assumed paternity, whether legitimate or illegitimate, will at least help us to understand the point of view at which Fichte took his stand to contemplate the universe of thought and existence. Now the prominent feature of the Kantian philosophy—indeed the very cardinal point of his whole system—is the distinction between *phenomena*, or things as they appear to us, and *noumena*, or things as they are in themselves. According to the philosopher of Königsberg, the human mind, whether in perception or in thought, is subject to certain necessary *laws* or *forms*, inherent in the constitution of the mind itself, which impart a corresponding character to all the objects of which we can take cognisance, whether by the senses or by the understanding. These forms, as regards the perception of individual objects, material or mental, are to be found in the conditions of Space and Time; and, as regards the conception of general notions, in the categories of Unity, Plurality, Totality, &c. Hence the objects of consciousness cannot be considered as exact copies of things as they exist, but as compounds formed by the mixture of two elements, the one external, dependent on the nature of the thing, the other internal, dependent on the constitution of the mind. Such a compound is, in Kant's sense of the term, a *phenomenon*, from which is distinguished the *noumenon*, or thing in itself; i. e., the thing as it exists out of all relation to human faculties. Hence it is evident that the thing in itself is to human faculties unknown and unknowable. To perceive a thing in itself, I must perceive it neither in space nor in time; for these conditions are furnished by the constitution of our perceptive faculties, and form the subjective element of all objects of perception. To think of a thing in itself, I must think of it neither as one, nor as many, nor under any other category; for these again depend upon the constitution of our understanding, and form the subjective element of all objects of thought.

Our present argument is concerned only with the speculative philosophy of modern Germany, as it descended in direct succession from Kant to its later representatives. The moral branch of the critical philosophy, however valuable and interesting in itself, is, logically considered, merely an episode and an inconsequence in the system. We shall not, therefore, attempt to describe how Kant attempted, by means of his practical philosophy, to escape from the charmed circle of phenomena which his speculative theories had drawn round him, or to point out the logical incongruities in which he was thereby involved. It will be sufficient for the present to state that

in the speculative system of Kant, from which the subsequent systems of his countrymen took their start, the limitation of human consciousness to mere phenomena was insisted upon as stringently in relation to the consciousness of our personal existence, as it was in relation to any object of the material world. The self of consciousness is apprehended under the condition of time, and is perceived as the one in relation to the many, as the single subject of various mental states. Hence, like all other objects of consciousness, it is known only as a phenomenon; the real self being thus an unknown something, distinct from the self of consciousness, and admitting of no resemblance to or comparison with it. In short the Cartesian evidence of real existence, *cogito ergo sum*—in so far as I am conscious I exist, is in the Kantian philosophy the evidence of mere appearance; *cogito ergo videor esse*—in so far as I am conscious, I have merely a phenomenal existence.

These principles being premised, a philosophy which starts from *myself* to deduce the universe, whatever may be its other errors, is not so utterly paradoxical as at first sight it would appear. For the world which is to be deduced is not, as common sense takes it to be, a system of external things existing before me, and independently of me; and the *I* from which it is to be deduced, is not the individual Kant or Fichte, whose existence began at a definite point of time some few years ago. The universe, as phenomenal, is, partly at least, dependent on the laws of the percipient mind, and so far is a development of the representative faculties of that mind; and the mind itself, as phenomenal also, is but the temporal manifestation in consciousness of some ulterior reality, existing out of time, and developed by its own laws into the temporal existence of the individual. In other words, my real existence as a thing is by no means identical with my consciousness of that existence as a phenomenon. But to let our philosophy rest here—as Kant, in fact, left it—would be to expose it to the reproach of that abomination of all right-minded Germans, speculative dualism. A real *ego* on the one side and a real *non-ego* on the other, cannot be tolerated together. ‘Two stars keep not their motion in one sphere;’ and, to satisfy the demands of philosophy, the weaker must go to the wall. Thus the *non-ego* is thrust aside by the superior pretensions of the *ego*. What need is there to suppose that the objects of my consciousness are produced partly from within and partly from without? If my representative faculty can spin half a phenomenon, like the spider, from its own entrails, why not the whole? The problem thus assumes the form in which it appears in the theory of Fichte,—to exhibit the representative

faculty, and the objects which it represents, as phenomena resulting from the self-development of an absolute *Ego* or I-by-myself-I.

It is manifest, however, that if this conception of the problem be once admitted, we are on the high road to Nihilism or Pantheism. The *ego*, as a thing, is out of all consciousness, and therefore unknown and unknowable. What evidence, then, have we that there is such a thing at all? Why may not the universe be an endless series of phenomena with no reality at the bottom? Why do we postulate a reality to account for phenomena, but because our thought seems to need it? And what is thought itself but a phenomenon, and conversant with the phenomenal only? There may be an apparent necessity to assume an apparent reality; but appearance, as we have seen already in the case of the *non-ego*, is no guarantee that the supposed reality truly exists. We live in a world of delusion,

‘Where nothing is, but all things seem,
And we the shadows of the dream.’

Why, then, is one shadow to claim beyond its fellows the privilege of denoting real existence? Reality is as much out of place as the substantial *Æneas* in the phantom bark of Charon, and its presence produces a similar result.

‘*Gemuit sub pondere cymba
Sutilis, et multam accepit rimosa paludem.*’

Our philosophy has sprung a leak; and, to save the vessel, we must make a Jonah of the absolute *Ego*. Having bidden the world and all that it contains to ‘come like shadows,’ we must complete the incantation with ‘so depart.’

If we shrink from Nihilism, there remains perhaps the alternative of Pantheism, as, at least, a more logical resting-place than our present half-way house. The instincts of our nature plead against annihilation, and maintain, in spite of philosophy, that there must really exist—something somewhere. Another horn is ready to complete the dilemma ‘on baith haffets.’ Granting that something exists, why is that something to be called *ego*? What qualities can it possess which shall make it *I* rather than *thou*, or any one being rather than any other being? My thoughts, so far as they are *mine*, are manifested in relation to a self of whose existence I am directly conscious. Philosophy tells me that this consciousness is a delusion, that this self is but the phenomenal shadow of a further self of which I am not conscious. But why should philosophy stop at this further self as the ultimate reality? Why may not it also be a

shadow of something further still? Why may there not be a yet more remote reality, which is itself neither self nor not-self, but the root and foundation, and at the same time the indifference of both? This ultimate existence, the one and sole reality, is then set up as the deity of philosophy, and the result is pure Pantheism. The two last stages of this process of reasoning indicate respectively the point at which Fichte in his earlier system stopped, and that at which Schelling took up the argument, and exhibited it in its ultimate aspect.

The conclusion of Fichte's earlier philosophy in its speculative form was pure Nihilism. Though assuming the existence of a real Self as implied by, though not exhibited among, the facts of consciousness, he could not evade the conclusion that this self, as beyond consciousness, is to human knowledge as though it had no existence. In answer to the question, 'What can I know?' speculative philosophy returns the sole reply, 'All that I know is my consciousness itself, immediate or mediate, of self or of not-self. The mediate consciousness is only possible through the immediate; and thus the consciousness of self is manifested only as accompanying my successive representations. At each moment of consciousness I can but repeat I, I, I, and always I; and thus at each moment I vanish to be produced again. . . . There is nothing enduring, neither without me nor within me; only an unceasing change. I know of no existence, not even of my own. There is no existence. I myself know nothing, and am nothing. Images alone are present in consciousness, and they know themselves after the manner of images. They vanish without the existence of anything to which they vanish: they are formed of images and by images; with nothing imaged by them; without meaning and without aim. I myself am one of these images; or, rather, I am not even this, but only a confused image of the images. All reality is changed into a wondrous dream, without a life to dream of, and without a mind to dream; a dream composed of a dream of itself. Perception is a dream; thought is the dream of that dream.'

It is true that Fichte, like Kant, endeavoured to escape, by the aid of his moral philosophy, from the desolating consequences of his speculative theories; but this part of his system it would be irrelevant to our present argument to discuss. We must pass on to the second alternative of the egoistic method—that of Pantheism as exemplified in the theory of Schelling. The

¹ 'Die Bestimmung des Menschen,' B. ii. Fichte's Werke, ii., pp. 244, 245.

system of this philosopher, though at its outset it adopts language almost identical with that of Fichte, is in reality based on a broader principle, which may be designated as that of Absolute Identity. In the formation of Schelling's theory, as in Fichte's, the *ego* and the *non-ego* are the principal elements; but their signification is by no means the same. The *ego* in Schelling's hands loses even the small remnant of personality which it had retained in those of his predecessor. Instead of an absolute Self or Person, not conscious but capable of becoming so, we have now an absolute Entity, having no attribute whatever, but that of simple existence; though capable of development into personal and impersonal existence alike. The assumption of this mere existence under the name of *self* or *ego* may perhaps be rendered intelligible as follows. The self of consciousness, or of any mode of personal existence implied by consciousness, is a finite and determinate self—is one out of many. There is an *I*, and there is also a *thou* and a *he*; and each of these, in different relations, exists as the *ego*. The *ego* of John is the *non-ego* of Thomas, and *vice versa*. This is the conclusion to which Fichte was driven by the demands of his practical philosophy, though his speculative system recognised no self save that implied by the thinker's own consciousness. But this conclusion, while it saves the demands of morality, does so only by placing human reason at variance with itself; the assertions of the moral reason or conscience or faith being in direct contradiction to those of the speculative reason. To reconcile the two, we must find a broader basis on which their conflicting theories may be merged in a common point of agreement. We need a first principle, not of knowledge merely, but of existence, which shall unite the subject and the object of consciousness by annihilating the difference between them. The *ego* from which speculation is to commence must not be *my* *ego* more than *yours*, nor *his* more than *ours*; but must be above and independent of personal existence and of the whole finite universe. Yet it may still retain the name of the *ego*, though in a different sense from that in which it is applicable to the personal self. For let us suppose for an instant that I, the person, am not a substance, but a transient mode of some higher substance, just as my thoughts and feelings are transient modes of me. The true *ego*, the real thing whose absolute existence is implied in my relative appearance of existence, is thus no longer *self* as distinguished from *not-self*, but the absolute substance of which self and not-self are both temporary modifications. The personal self is no longer conceived as a substance to which consciousness belongs as a phenomenon, but is merged in a higher

substance, to which personality itself and all its modes, and likewise all impersonal existence, equally belong as phenomena. This higher substance, or only real existence, is the *absolute ego* of Schelling, which he does not hesitate to call by the name of God. Thus the system which emerges is one of pure Pantheism; God or the absolute alone exists; the phenomena of the finite world, whether of mind, on the one side, or of matter on the other, are but opposite modes of the Divine One and All.

We have thus apparently got back to the old Pantheism of Spinoza, with its universal Deity manifested in thought and extension. But Schelling's system, though in its results it has much resemblance to Spinoza's, differs from it widely in the manner in which those results are obtained. Spinoza, as Schelling himself has remarked, endeavoured to attain to an absolute principle of all things by starting, not from the conception of the subject of consciousness or *ego*, but from that of the object or *non-ego*. Commencing with the assumption that the things of which we are conscious, if not themselves realities, are at least representatives of some ulterior reality, Spinoza endeavoured to exhibit the objects of consciousness, and the conscious mind along with them, as modes of one absolute substance, the substratum and support of the whole. Schelling, on the other hand, commencing, not with a hypothetical substratum invented for the support of the objects of consciousness, but with an immediate affirmation of consciousness itself, namely, that *my* thoughts are modes of *me*, proceeds to deduce a conclusion ultimately destructive of the very fact on which itself depends. For he infers that the self of consciousness and its several modes, as well as the objects which those modes imply, are but phenomenal manifestations of an absolute subject, in which the apparent subject of consciousness is itself swallowed up in common with the rest of the finite universe. Pantheism is no doubt the conclusion of both systems, as it is the logical consequence of every consistent philosophy of the Absolute; but the two philosophers arrive at one termination by opposite courses, as two travellers journeying eastward and westward will finally meet at the same spot.

Against the fundamental position of Schelling, as against that of Fichte, common sense repeats its former objection. Even granting that the theory is true, how can any man know it to be true? As in Fichte's system all possibility of knowledge seems to be destroyed when the knowing subject becomes so absolute as to leave nothing to be known; so in Schelling's system a similar impossibility results when both subject and object are swallowed up in the indifference of the Absolute.

Granting that the Absolute exists, how can I know that it exists, or that it is the Absolute? As conscious, I must be conscious of my own existence and of my relation to the object of which I am conscious. If I am merely an accidental mode of the Absolute, if my real existence is undistinguishable from that of the One and All, I cannot possibly know this to be the case; for the very act of knowledge implies the distinction of the knower and the known. To meet this objection, it is necessary to postulate the existence of an absolute knowledge, not merely answering to, but identical with, the supposed absolute existence. *Intellectual Intuition*, which Schelling regards as the only true instrument and method of philosophy, is a state above and beyond consciousness, and superior to the laws of consciousness—an ecstatic vision, out of time and out of difference, in which the ordinary distinction of subject and object is merged in the indifference of both.

This intuition is obviously a state quite distinct from consciousness. To be conscious, I must be conscious of something; and the *I* and the *something* stand thus distinguished from and related to each other. We have thus two mental states, distinct from and antagonistic to each other, one of which asserts that I am identical with the Absolute, and the other, that I am distinct from it. Neither of these assertions can be compared with the other; for there is no common faculty which can take cognisance of both. The two states, supposing both to exist, must exist as separate and incommunicable; each ceasing before the other can begin, each denying what the other affirms. ‘Which is the wiser here? Justice or Iniquity?’ Why is not consciousness as trustworthy in denying the supposed identity as the intellectual intuition in affirming it?

To supply this break in the chain of philosophy is the aim of Hegel’s system, as the supplement and corrective of Schelling’s. The abnormal intuition of indifference and the normal consciousness of difference cannot be allowed to stand, as in Schelling’s theory, isolated and apart from each other; there must be a connecting link—a common process of absolute thought—from which both must spring, and by which each may be compared with the other. The process of identification must be carried to its highest possible pitch: the true method of philosophy must commence neither with consciousness as such, nor with unconsciousness as such, nor with any one mental state as distinguished from any other mental state; but with an Absolute Process, which shall start from the assumption of no definite contents, and proceed to develop all identity and all difference, all thought and all existence, as opposite sides of the

great fundamental negation. The Absolute, the starting-point and principle of philosophy, may be defined, according to Hegel, as the identity of being and not-being. This comprehensive principle, while thus annihilating all difference, necessarily annihilates along with it all definite contents in itself; and the Hegelian method may thus be briefly summed up in the following problem, 'Given nothing, to deduce everything.'

To make the principle of this system intelligible to an English reader, it will be necessary to adopt a mode of exposition very different from that employed by the author himself. The philosophy of Hegel has been described, by his disciple and editor Michelet, as an attempt to *re-think the great thought of creation*; but this expression requires to be understood in a different sense from that which at first sight would suggest itself. In the first place, *creation* must not be interpreted to mean the generation of the visible universe: the world, in the Hegelian philosophy, is not an aggregate of sensible phenomena, but a system of rational laws. An illustration adopted by Mr. Morell will serve to throw light on this distinction.

'Suppose you are revisiting a charming waterfall which you had seen and admired the previous summer. The scene that your senses actually gaze upon is precisely the same as it was before; there is the stream rolling over its ridge of rock; there are the hues of the sunshine playing upon it; the spray throwing its almost invisible mist over the surface; the green leaves, the flowers, the shadows of the trees, and the roar of the cataract. And yet, when you *interpret* the scene which the senses reveal, by your inward *reason*, you know that not one particle of what we term the actual, material reality that before met your eye, is now left. The water has flowed to the ocean; the sunshine renews itself every instant; verdant nature has died away and reproduced itself; nay, if we could only understand the secret physiology at work through every atom of its organic structure, you would see that its very existence is a constant process of life and death, and never for one instant a fixed existence. Well, then, what do you *really* see when you stand and contemplate the scene? You simply see the *complex result of a number of natural laws*—laws which form the interior essence of nature herself, and are but the outward expressions of the infinite *thought* from which it came. Which then shall we say is the *reality*?—the mere phenomenon which the senses reveal, or the laws which produce that phenomenon, and which are accessible only to the grasp of reason? Clearly the latter; for that alone is the abiding truth, while the other is a mere outward appearance that passes away and anon renews itself.'¹

In the second place, we must not think of creation as the act of a Creator. In identifying existence with thought, and thought with a creative process, we must not conceive this creative thought as a mode of the Divine consciousness, ana-

¹ 'Modern German Philosophy,' pp. 50, 51.

logous to the human act of thinking, nor indeed as implying a thinker at all. The *thought* is nothing more than the law or purpose which the world, consciously or unconsciously, carries out in its phenomenal development; and when thought is declared to be identical with being, it is not meant that any conception of an object is identical with the object itself, but that real existence is to be sought, not in the phenomena of sense, but in the law or process of which those phenomena are the manifestation. Hence it is obvious that, the higher the abstraction into which we can resolve the phenomena, the nearer we approach to the true conception of existence. The transitions, for instance, of any number of sensible objects from one form to another, of the tree from verdure to barrenness, of the stream from water to ice, may be comprehended under the general notion of *change*; and change is thus, as a general notion, a nearer approximation to true existence than the various relations of phenomena which are comprehended under it. Pursuing this argument to its final consequence, it will follow that the highest abstraction of all, which ordinary logic regards as the creation of our own minds, is in the Hegelian system the fullest and most complete reality.

Such an abstraction is to be found in the conception of *Being* in general. All phenomena are manifestations of that which is; and the law of Being in general, if any such law can be discovered, is the true conception of the process which constitutes existence. To ascertain this law, we must first strip the conception of Being of all characteristic attributes—of everything that constitutes it this kind of being rather than that; for in proportion as we approach to definiteness, we recede from reality. Pure Being has, therefore, no distinguishing marks—in other words, it is identical with pure Nothing. And thus, by placing the principle of existence in the abstraction of all definiteness, we arrive at the first axiom of Hegel's philosophy—the identity of existence and non-existence.

But it is also necessary to assume for this pure Being—this Nothing-Something—a law of self-development, by which it may represent the reality which underlies the changes of sensible phenomena. Let us, then, again generalize upwards from the conception of *change*. Water, for instance, becomes ice; what, then, is meant by *becoming*? Water, in so far as it is water, is not ice; ice, in so far as it is ice, is not water. Water, therefore, becomes not-water, and not-ice becomes ice. The process of *becoming* is thus the union of *is* with *is not*—of a particular mode of existence with the negation of that mode. This representation, in its most general terms, forms the second

axiom of Hegel's philosophy—Becoming is the union of Being with Nothing or Not-Being. In this abstraction we have the type or general law of the process of existence in all its special modifications: the *union of contradictories* is the reality of which all phenomena are the manifestations.

But when we proceed to examine more closely this ingenious evolution of all things from the primeval nothing, we shall find only another instance of the truth of the maxim *E nihilo nihil fit*. Existence, according to Hegel, is a process by which absolute being, which is identical with absolute nothing, develops itself into definite forms. In other words, it is relation with nothing to be related. For the abstraction which removes all finite things, removes, at the same time, all possibility of the three relations of *thesis*, *antithesis*, and *synthesis*, which are only possible between distinct finite objects placed in opposition to or in conjunction with each other. 'Substance,' says Aristotle, 'is in its nature prior to relation:' there can be no relation without things to be related. Hegel, on the contrary, endeavours to make relation prior to substance; and, in so doing, he is compelled, at the same moment, to affirm and to deny his original position. Pure being is pure not-being; so far the two elements are identical and undistinguishable. Being and not-being constitute becoming; so far the two elements are separate ingredients, distinct from and opposed to each other.

In fact, Hegel endeavours to transfer to the region of the infinite and absolute a principle which has no significance except in the sphere of the finite and relative. The union of contradictories exists only in so far as a finite object is viewed in opposite relations. Every finite object is conceived as being that which it is, and as not being that which it is not. But this relation of *is* and *is not* holds good only so long as two definite objects are compared together, and vanishes entirely as soon as we attempt to unite the two special objects into one general notion. We once heard Hegel's philosophy explained to a circle of the uninitiated in the following manner: 'You will allow that that which is a dog is not a cat.' 'Granted.' 'Well, then, strike off dog and cat, as minutiae unworthy of a philosopher, and it remains that that which is, is not.' The exposition is hardly a caricature; but it is strange that so profound a thinker as Hegel should not have seen that the conception of definite objects, such as *dog* and *cat*, is prior, in nature no less than in knowledge, to the conception of abstract relations, such as *is* and *is not*, and that, by annihilating all definite existing objects, we annihilate the possibility and even the conceivability of existence itself.

Hegel's famous principle of the identity of contradictories thus falls to the ground; and we are brought back once more to those laws of finite thought which the philosopher repudiates as inapplicable to the processes of the higher reason and valid only for the understanding. We are compelled, in spite of Hegel's protest to the contrary, to admit the principles of identity and contradiction as the conditions of all legitimate thought; and these are necessarily manifested as limitations of the object conceived; everything of which we can think being necessarily excluded from partaking of the nature of its logical contradictory. Hence it follows, not that there is a philosophy of the unlimited, superior to relation and undaunted by contradiction, but that all thought is *ipso facto* limitation, and that what is beyond limits is also beyond philosophy. In one sense Hegel's opening paradox is true—pure being is pure nothing. For we can conceive no object, save as definite and distinguished from other objects; and by repudiating the conception of this or that definite existing thing, we obtain simply the negation of all conceivable existence. Hegel's error lies in mistaking this mere non-conception of the relative for a conception of the absolute; in supposing that we have ascended to a higher mode of thought, when we have merely rejected the conditions under which thinking is possible, and thereby refused to think at all.

We have now probably inflicted on our readers as much metaphysics as will be tolerated in a single article; and it may therefore be prudent to conclude, though some subordinate and some antagonist developments of German philosophy remain unnoticed. But imperfect as our sketch necessarily is, it is, we trust, sufficient to show the one great error which pervades all the systems which we have described, and to point out the practical lesson which is to be drawn from the study of them. The history of German philosophy during the early part of the present century is especially valuable as testifying to the unanimous admission of the profoundest thinkers of modern times, that a philosophy of the absolute can only be reached by transcending the laws of human consciousness. The absolute self of Fichte, the absolute identity of Schelling, the absolute notion of Hegel—and the same may be said of the principal antagonist systems also—are alike based on assumptions which it is impossible to verify if true, and impossible to convict if false; for truth and falsehood are alike relations, and imply an object and a thought about that object, distinct from each other, and agreeing with or differing from each other. Yet the problem which suggested these extravagances must have a meaning; otherwise men could never have even attempted to solve

it. That the natural consciousness of man bears witness to the existence of a distinction between the real and the apparent, the permanent and the transitory, the substance and its modes, is a truth announced by the failures no less than by the triumphs of philosophy, and confirmed by the whole history of human thought in every age and in every country. What is the true nature of the problem which has been disguised under so many false appearances? what is the real testimony of consciousness concerning the distinction between things and phenomena?—is a question which we cannot attempt to discuss now. One point, however, may be considered as established, both by what philosophy has done and by what she has left undone; namely, that the reality of which we are in search can never be attained in the form of an absolute unity. The first testimony of consciousness is to the distinct existence of *self* and *not-self*,—of the conscious subject and of the object of which he is conscious; and every system of philosophy which begins or ends with the denial of this distinction can accomplish nothing more than an intellectual suicide. That a complete investigation of the problem of reality and appearance from the side of common sense is likely to be attempted by British thinkers in the present generation, is more than we can venture to anticipate; but if we may presume to offer a suggestion to our more metaphysical kinsmen on the other side of the German Ocean, how to turn their speculative faculties to a better account than hitherto, we should take the liberty, notwithstanding the shock to national prejudices, and emboldened by the failure of all other recipes, to tender our advice to the rising generation of philosophers in the approved style of the modern literature of advertisements:—
'Try Dualism.'

ADAM BEDE AND RECENT NOVELS.

1. *Adam Bede*. By George Eliot. Blackwood.
2. *The Bertrams*. By Anthony Trollope. Chapman and Hall.
3. *Creeds*. By the Author of *Morals of Mayfair*. Hurst and Blackett.
4. *Life's Foreshadowings*. Hurst and Blackett.
5. *Trust for Trust*. By A. J. Barrowcliffe. Smith and Elder.
6. *The Broad Arrow*. By Oline Keese. Bentley.

THE reign of romance is an extending one. It gains ground in spite of the perpetual protests of utilitarianism, useful knowledge, and Puritanism. The number of those who 'never read novels' diminishes season by season, or those who make the complacent profession have to qualify it by an ever-increasing list of exceptions; for, in fact, every man's own favourite field of thought falls by turns under the illuminating ray of the magician. Fancy and invention grow bold in their experiments, taught by success that there are very few scenes in the world which skill cannot turn into a good picture: so one by one the strongholds of commonplace, actual life yield to their invasion. Having long expatiated in flights of heroism, startling incidents, violent contrasts, and all extremes of character and fortune till their legitimate vein is exhausted, they have sought a fresh one, and found themselves as potent in extracting interest and wonder out of the every-day externally uniform life which the many must lead, as they were of old in the exceptional careers and incidents to which we still attach the title of romance, which fall to the lot of few indeed, and which have delighted because of their strangeness and the novelty of the ideas and impressions they awake in us. There is a grave class of minds who cannot give their sympathy but through their experience: to such the efforts of imagination, and the description of scenes and modes of life of which they have no personal knowledge, will tell nothing, will be slighted as frivolities beneath the regard of men engaged in the actual business of life. But let one of this class be a real observer, and find his immediate field of speculation illustrated by a keener observation and clearer insight than his own, and he will no longer be insensible to the charm of invention. All that goes to a good novel will not be thrown away upon him, and to his surprise he will feel himself stirred by as keen an interest in fancied sorrows,

as engrossed in the fortunes of imaginary persons and mere shadows, as any novel-reader he ever despised.

In this way, one by one, they fall into the train. Thus persons who had resisted Walter Scott, because they had no old-world sympathies, were subdued by Sam Weller and Mrs. Gamp; those who could not condescend to these vulgar wits found 'Vanity Fair' to reproduce what they knew of the world; the harsh, unattractive, but vivid nature of 'Jane Eyre' and 'Shirley' caught some not to be snared by smoother blandishments. Mrs. Gaskell's pictures of mechanic life, amid whirling wheels and smoking chimneys, were accepted by others as an embodiment, for which they could vouch, of the mode of existence of the masses; so utilizing fiction, elsewhere a barren, unprofitable pleasure. The 'Heir of Redclyffe' brought to their allegiance many who never fancied before that they could get through a novel. The 'Caxtons' won a more precise class, who had pronounced all previous romance vain and demoralizing; and Mr. Kingsley's amusing doubt and dramatized paradox struck others who rejoiced in a freedom from prejudice, and found their favourite calling of propounding knotty questions all the pleasanter, and not less puzzling for being wrapped in a seductive veil of allegory: and now, in contrast with all these, we conclude our brief enumeration with 'Adam Bede,' a story which we believe has found its way into hands indifferent to all previous fiction, to readers who welcome it as the voice of their own experience in a sense no other book has ever been.

Certainly 'Adam Bede' has a voice of its own which chimes in a telling, because natural and simple way, with associations and thoughts which have been lying half developed and struggling for expression in many minds. It is remarkable, too, for a steady protest against exclusiveness, a characteristic of our time, as prevalent in our literature as in society, and as marked in the high-toned religious fiction of the day as in its more natural home, the fashionable novel; but from which a large number must always revolt, either from personal feelings or a sense of injury to the claims and rights of humanity. In another point the notices of the press show an undesigned coincidence of response—and that is the tone of the author on religious matters; orthodox and serious, but viewed rather in their moral than doctrinal aspect, as more within the scope of his subject and turn of thought. It strikes us that the laity, unconsciously to themselves, recognise a champion: here is a religious utterance which somehow differs a good deal from the general tone of the pulpit utterances we have been used to. Conscience takes a higher stand than has been sometimes found compatible with

the war of doctrine waged in this polemical age. With all the force of wit, humour, common sense, and pathos, some home questions have been put which sermon-hearers think it will not be easy for their pastors to answer; and, above all, Mrs. Poyser's immortal illustration has avenged much irritation, discontent, and weariness, which the sufferer did not know before could be defended and justified. Do any two people ever talk three minutes over this story without quoting, with a particularly sly relish, the definition of Mr. Ryde's style of preaching, as though it met some case very near home, which, out of respect or delicacy, they will not further indicate? No names may be mentioned, the subject may be treated as a general one, but not the less does it go home to each individual's business and bosom; and the next time he hears a cold, harsh, controversial sermon—which may very likely be next Sunday—not only does the joke soothe at the time, answering to the marbles the Master Poyser carried to church, with the prospect of 'handling them a little secretly during the sermon,' but he feels armed with a reason for his repugnance which before seemed to need an apology; for whatever views this writer expresses, they are clearly arrived at by a process of thought; the weight of calm conviction gives value to every sentiment whether we agree or not; and we feel that in this story we have the experience of a life.

'Adam Bede' has the difficulty, as it is commonly considered, of a prominent moral, too often an impediment to the natural development of a story; but owing to its simplicity and breadth, and its appeal to universal assent and sympathy, in this instance it gains a support, as assisting to develop character, and to work out and give verisimilitude to the plot, if the simple structure of incidents can be so denominated. Its moral is, that the past cannot be blotted out, that evil cannot be undone. This conviction is expressed with a strength and persistency that turns into a sort of inspiration the author's motive for the labour of composition; which, if a delight, is assuredly in this case also a labour, from the conscientious adherence to truth, or what seems to him truth, which marks the whole. This, we feel, is no young genius writing from a teeming imagination full of airy shapes, but one who has learnt from experience, and, we must believe, real contact with trouble; not through sympathy only—the school of young writers whose sensibility is quickly stirred to create pictures out of every feeling or emotion brought before them—but, together with sympathy, by actual participation in the emotions and sorrows portrayed. Though new as an author, it is not

possible that this writer can be new to life; there is no guess-work here, but hard-won knowledge, with ample space to look back upon the conflict, to mature thought out of transient pain. And space, too, for retrospect, not only of pain and sorrow, but of joy—space to live over again in the memory a peaceful happy existence—so peaceful amid such gentle excitements that the happiness was perhaps not realized till it was over. For this is another indirect, but not less valuable moral of the book, to teach us that our real happiness consists in the less excited and agitated period of our lives, in a tenor of quiet days amid simple natural scenes. It teaches us to value these while we have them, proving, by the gentle pathos of a yearning memory, that it is the peaceful pleasures that wind the closest round the heart, which form the habits, mould the mind, satisfy the unconscious desires and needs of our nature, raise that structure of thoughts, fancies, habits, and ways, which make up ourself, and which, except in the wounding of the most intimate affections, cause the widest, most irreparable breach when we lose them. There are country scenes in 'Adam Bede' looked back upon with an almost passionate tenderness, as though the senses ached for the genial old home.

What connection the writer may have had with country life we do not know. A close participation in its cares and business is not compatible with the indications of a thorough education; but some sort of constant familiar intercourse with its details is evident, and forces us into speculations as to the real authorship of this remarkable work. Here is a picture of life of rare power, of close adherence to nature. Where has this knowledge been learnt? through what processes has the author acquired his skill? He at once stands on a different footing with us from the ordinary novelist, whose versatility enables him to make so much out of a little fact, such showy fabrics out of small suggestions. Somehow we never find ourselves attributing invention to this writer. Whether true or not, we believe that it is all real as far as the emotions of the actors are concerned; that what is so vividly reported is taken from life; that the author has witnessed, perhaps experienced, all the deeper, more powerful feelings so truthfully portrayed. And here we will commit ourselves to an opinion on this disputed question with the diffidence that people must feel who know that any day may test their discernment; but we feel ourselves incapable of entering upon a discussion of 'Adam Bede' with our readers without expressing our suspicion that it is from a female pen. There are, it is true, many passages and whole scenes which do not support the view, but the impression comes back in spite of

them. The time is past for any felicity, force, or freedom of expression to divert our suspicions on this head; if women will write under certain conditions, perhaps more imperatively required from them than from men, as well as more difficult of attainment, it is proved that a wide range of human nature lies open to their comprehension; so that if things in this novel seem to be observed from a woman's point of view, we need not discard the notion because it is well and ably done. While we make this concession, we wish it to be understood that we still hold our own conviction, that there are subjects and passions which will always continue man's inalienable field of inquiry; but on this region we do not think the author of 'Adam Bede' trenches. Genius, to be sure, is of no sex, nor can we pretend to set limits to the insight of the imagination into every possible human scene or contingency; and this shall be our answer if 'George Eliot' proves to be no *nom de guerre*, or if Mr. Anders is right and the author is Mr. Joseph Liggins after all, as he persists in declaring himself; or, as others say, a very young man, son of a small town tradesman, who has dug into other memories, and knows nothing of what he writes but through the fancy. But until the fact is proved against us we shall continue to think that the knowledge of female nature is feminine, not only in its details, which might be borrowed from other eyes, but in its whole tone of feeling; that so is the full, close scrutiny of observation exercised in scanning every feature of a bounded field of inquiry; that the acquaintance with farm life in its minute particulars, and the secure ground on which the author always stands in matters of domestic housewifery, is another indication; that the position of the writer towards every point in discussion is a woman's position, that is, from a stand of observation rather than more active participation. Then, as every supposition seems to us more probable than that 'Adam Bede' should prove to be a clergyman's work, and yet it is full of knowledge of clerical doings, this is to us another sign; for women are by nature and circumstances the great clerical sympathisers; and often the politics of a parish, its leaders and party divisions, the most stirring bit of public life that comes under their immediate eye. Lastly, there is the moral: women are known dearly to love a 'well-directed moral.' We will not multiply reasons, because, after all, impressions arise for which it is difficult to assign a cause. So having thus satisfied our candour, we will not further invade the reserve the author seems determined to maintain in spite of all attacks made on it by 'Times,' correspondents, but continue to apply such personal pronouns as *he* would have us use.

The influence of association is strongest on minds which, by nature active and observant, have always had leisure to allow congenial impressions to work into the inner being ; which are not too busy to disregard any circumstances of their position ; minds which people every familiar scene with a pleasant, leisurely crowd of thoughts and fancies, till each salient point is hung and garlanded with these memorials, and haunted, as it were, by a summer hum of reverie. We all have scenes sacred by this influence, spots to which habit has so closely allied us that we see ourselves reflected in them ; we belong to them, and they to us ; in which every shadow has its secret, and every yearly returning sunbeam its especial affinity with ourselves ; where every form, every face, every voice, is charged with a significance beyond what meets the eye or ear. It is in such moments that we feel our whole being ; the past, the present are one ; a sense of harmony pervades us ; every gentle feeling is in the ascendant. When gifted minds come to describe scenes and persons with whom they hold these associations, they unconsciously fulfil the precept of charity, for they love their subject as they love themselves, and feel towards them as towards parts of themselves. And herein lies the difference of one talent for description with another, whether it be of an inanimate scene or a character. There is a power of description, graphic, lifelike, truthful, which engages and entertains us for a while, and then, we know not why, palls upon us. We cannot account for the fact, that, in spite of our testimony to its success, our attention is not chained, our sympathy flags. We do not doubt the reason to be, because the author has not felt in the process, he has merely observed : there is no other connection between him and his subject. There are others who seem, by the same process, by the same words, to infuse a life and virtue into their work, as though a warm south wind breathed around them ; and this is the genial influence of association connecting them closely with their subject. After all there is something cold-blooded in mere portrait-painting, in giving features, touch by touch, just as we see them, however correctly it is done ; and we soon begin to feel this without thinking of the reason. But where the heart is concerned the perception is immediately quickened ; all things group themselves harmoniously ; instinct leads to the points which really tell upon other minds ; trifles are trifles no longer, when the light of love glorifies them ; and it is through association, far more than through the inherent merits or beauties of any particular subject, that this love is generated. We love the scenes and people about us as we love our children, not because they are better or prettier than other

places or other children, but because the good and beauty in them have spoken to us, are incorporated with our nature till we are blended in an absolute union.

We believe it is the power of association which gives the charm to the 'Vicar of Wakefield.' Goldsmith, through the wilful vagabondism of his career, looked back upon its one stationary period—to the rustic parsonage where life, hope, poetry, and wit first stirred and glowed within him; to that home, peopled, as it must have been, by tempers that could not be seriously ruffled, since his provocations never alienated them from himself. This retrospect we look upon as the source of the exquisite repose which constitutes that tale the most soothing and harmonious of fictions. No one can call this delightful book a correct picture of society and manners as they ever were or will be: there is little truth of fact about it; and sometimes, in our craving for this quality elsewhere, we muse over our own inconsistency in being more than content with such a travesty of actual life as it gives us. But it was real to him. He was not expatiating in mere fancies. We do not doubt that as he looked back his home did seem to him that Arcadian mixture of homeliness and refinement, of labour and leisure, of wisdom and folly, of knowledge and ignorance. If it portrayed no one else it pictures himself in all these points, and so, under the quaint veil of anomalies, is true at bottom. Nor do we doubt that all the more prominent scenes of humour had their counterpart, in fact even to the bargain of the green spectacles; since, for the edification of mankind, the author was invested with the somewhat contradictory powers of enacting absurdities in good faith, and afterwards so keenly appreciating his own blunders as to turn them into everlasting lessons for mankind.

And a certain homeliness is necessary to the full growth of associations: they must have, in some sense, to do with the business of life as well as its repose, with the happiness and dignity of work. The elegancies of the fashionable world, the domain of rigid proprieties, have no power of creating them: in the one, the mind is too feverishly engrossed with the present; in the other, under too much restraint. In 'Adam Bede' we recognise their sway in every page,—in the description of the village church, in Joshua Rann's mysteriously sonorous reading, in the damp sequestered coolness of Mrs. Poyser's dairy. How every sense recalls its pleasantness! All summer, with its sights and sounds and delicious labours seem to surround us as we read—

'Ah! I think I taste that whey now—with a flavour so delicate that one can hardly distinguish it from an odour; and with that soft gliding

warmth that fills one's imagination with a still, happy dreaminess. And the light music of the dropping whey is in my ears, mingling with the twittering of a bird outside the wire net-work window—the window overlooking the garden, and shaded by tall gueldre roses.'

Our own age, as we have said, differs from its predecessors in its gradual reclaiming large tracts of existence from the obscurity of an utter removal from all that interests the fancy. This can only be done by degrees, as some warm heart perceives in its own surroundings, in the life in which its own sympathies expand, a capability of being so delineated as to awake similar sympathies in others. It requires genius to awake to the fact that the people we live amongst are just as full of interest as those whom other people have made famous—that it is only dull people who see nothing to care for in their own society and immediate neighbourhood. To prove this, the author, turning the tables on those fastidious tempers who sigh for ideal excellence, favours us with the supercilious experiences of the publican, Mr. Gedge, who, wherever he lived, found his neighbours—'and they were all the people he knew—"a poor lot, sir," big and little, a poor lot,' for his own part frankly avowing that

'The way in which I have come to the conclusion that human nature is loveable—the way I have learnt something of its deep pathos and its sublime mysteries has been by living a great deal among people more or less commonplace and vulgar.'—Vol. ii. p. 17.

To delineate such nature does, as he says, need very exact truth, and it is this recognition of its difficulty which constitutes much of his strength.

'Dreading nothing, indeed, but falsity, which, in spite of one's best efforts, there is still reason to dread. Falsehood is so easy, truth so difficult. Examine your words well, and you will find that even when you have no motive to be false, it is a very hard thing to say the exact truth, even about your own immediate feelings; much harder than to say something fine about them which is not the exact truth.'—Vol. ii. p. 5.

This author's intense desire to be true is often a check upon his scenes, and throws him rather on investigating motives than giving their results in words. It sometimes looks as if he would venture on no expression until he had traced it to its source, and, consequently, we find that some of the characters who occupy us most speak very little; we follow their turns of thought, we see the desires that most actuate them, and do not know that they never betray themselves in words. In every crisis he gives us the gradual growth of a thought, or impulse, from its first unconscious stirring in the kindred nature to its maturity in speech and action. This habit, no doubt, conduces

to charity: a deed done, or even a word spoken, is an act over which we can sit in judgment; but how that word came to be spoken, the temptation which led to it, the human nature which yielded—there is quite sure to be something in the process with which we can sympathise; enough for pity and fellow feeling to mingle with our virtuous indignation, and divest it of some of its harshness. Even Hetty, vain and hard as she is, into whose inner life we are so carefully initiated, who speaks so few words, and yet whom we feel to know so well, she is less repulsive to us than if we did not see the workings of her mind and the imperviousness to external influences for good which her narrow self-concentration has produced.

In consequence of this system of tracing effects to their causes, it has been said that the author of 'Adam Bede' represents people as all alike, comparing him, in this respect, with Mr. Thackeray. With that gentleman's works we are not now concerned; but the fact of showing all people as equally exposed to temptation, and liable to err, has nothing to do with proving them all alike—which can only be done by showing that all people alike *yield* to temptation. This is contrary, not only to the professed teaching, but to the whole bearing of the story—which enforces that men need not do wrong unless they like; that they have a voice within which distinctly forbids evil actions, and a power under certain conditions of resistance. To us the aim, and more than the aim, the real effect of it is, to press upon us the mighty difference that conscience, and a fixed principle of action, makes in the same human natures. Ordinary novelists are prone to allow so much to human weakness, its passions and temptations, that conscience is shoved out of its place as a *part* of our nature, and made, as it were, an external power which we have to obey, not an inward voice, quite as much a part of us as our appetites, and as urgent in asserting its rights. Here there is no fatality, no inevitable sin, but free will and awful responsibility. It is a fact that the most absorbing and original novel we have had for many a year is also the most sternly moral. The story admits us into three consciences, in the various degrees of efficiency which the habit of attending to their dictates will produce, round which the words and acts of the rest of the characters group themselves and on which rule they work. In Adam this rule of conscience reigns supreme. The inevitable consequences of wrong-doing have pressed heavily and painfully on the author's mind, and have led him to trace the evil stream to its source and first conception, and show how alone it may be stopped. In Adam a temptation from the outset is not entertained, but judged by the inner rule implanted in his breast—there is

no reference to the world's judgment: what other people think on a question of right and wrong is nothing to him; the sense of duty holds communion with him, commands and forbids with a master's sway; as when a lad of eighteen, disgusted with the degrading troubles of home, he tries to run away, and walks back again because he *can't* go on—his man's nature forbids it; 'A pig may poke his nose into the trough and think o' nothing outside it; but if you've got a man's heart and soul in you, you can't be easy a making your own bed an' leaving the rest to lie on the stones.' Every conviction with him is a thing to be acted on, every deed a thing that cannot be undone. 'It's well we should feel as life's a reckoning we can't make twice over; there's no real making amends in this world any more, nor you can mend a wrong subtraction by doing your addition right. . . . You can never do what's wrong without breeding sin and trouble more than you can ever see the end on: it's like a bit of bad workmanship—you never see the end o' the mischief it'll do. . . . I hate that talk o' people, as if there was a way o' making amends for everything. They'd more need to be brought to see as the wrong they do can never be altered. When a man's spoil'd his fellow-creature's life, he's no right to comfort himself with thinking good may come out of it. Somebody else's good doesn't alter her shame and misery.'

With Arthur Donnithorne, conscience holds a divided empire with the opinion of the world. He is more seemingly loveable than Adam, for he has a more constant wish to please—it is a necessity in him, to be liked and loved. 'Deeds of kindness to him were as easy as a bad habit;' but he does not view actions in their naked aspect of right and wrong. What others think, how they appear to the world, is as much his standard; and self obscures the claims of others. Temptations are entertained and played with, consequences kept out of sight. He has a self-complacent estimate of himself, which always interposes a barrier to any strict scrutiny of motives. The author's mocking satire unmasks the inner complacency of such minds. 'Arthur had an agreeable consciousness that his faults were all of a generous kind, impetuous, warm-hearted, leonine—never crawling, crafty, reptilian. It was not possible for Arthur to do anything mean, or dastardly, or cruel. "No, I'm a devil of a fellow for getting myself into a hobble, but I always take care the load shall fall on my own shoulders." . . . He was nothing if not good-natured. . . . You perceive that Arthur was a good fellow! . . . There was a sort of implicit confidence in him that he was really such a good fellow at bottom, Providence would not treat him harshly.' He has faith in retribution and making

amends, and shrinks from the irrevocableness of his own wrongdoing sternly pressed upon him by Adam.

‘Arthur would so gladly have persuaded himself that he had done no harm, and if no one had told him the contrary, he could have persuaded himself so much better. Nemesis can seldom forge a sword for herself out of our consciences, out of the suffering we feel, in the suffering we may have caused. Our moral sense learns the manners of good society, and smiles when others smile. But when some rough person gives rough names to our actions, she is apt to take part against us.’—Vol. ii. p. 266.

The author is mistrustful of mere natural gifts, and pleases himself in reducing this seemingly generous, candid temper, to the supposed necessity of a mean lie. ‘Our deeds determine us as much as we determine our deeds, and until we know what has been or will be, the peculiar combination of outward with inward facts which constitutes a man’s critical actions, it will be better not to think ourselves wise about his character. There is a terrible coercion in our deeds. . . . The second wrong presents itself to him as the only practicable right. . . . No man can escape this vitiating effect of an offence against his own sentiment of right.’ But for all this Arthur has a conscience, though it needs foreign aid to make itself fully felt, as with average minds, who have blunted its edge, it always does. Thus before Adam’s words of hatred and contempt, ‘All-screening self-excuse, which rarely falls quite away while others respect us, forsook him for an instant, and he stood face to face with the first great irrevocable evil he had ever committed!’ Arthur then represents conscience reduced to the standard to which ordinary men, subject to the ordinary impulses to good and evil bring it.

In Hetty it suffers a further eclipse. She has no inner rule of action. She illustrates the pleasures and the pains of vanity. Self is the limit of her horizon, the beginning and the end of her hopes, fears, and desires. If it were not for that childishness which detracts from the weight of her responsibility, hers would be too painful a character to dwell on, drawn as it is with such microscopic insight into weaknesses and deficiencies, and with such wonderful knowledge of the peculiar temptations of youth and beauty under the influence of vanity. Thoughtless, hard-hearted youth! how true it is ‘that young souls in such pleasant deliriums as hers are as unsympathising as butterflies sipping nectar. They are isolated from all appeals by a barrier of dreams, by invisible looks, and impalpable aims.’ Her ‘silly imagination’ is always weaving her own future, intent on her own luxurious dreams. She has no thought or interest to give to anything outside herself, and, as Mrs. Poyser says, ‘There’s

nothing seems to give her a turn i' the inside.' You can't wake a response in her heart. Even her lover is nothing to her compared to his gifts, and never once interposes between her and her self-idolatry. In her misery, 'her own misery filled her heart; she had no room for other people's sorrow.' She has never listened to an inner voice—her only good, praise and admiration: and shame—her conscience. Vanity had stopped up every moral inlet. Religion had taken no hold on her; its teaching had gone for nothing: 'for any practical result of strength in life or trust in death she had never appropriated a single Christian idea or Christian feeling.' It is an unflinching, almost a remorseless picture, only justified by a knowledge of the mischief vanity can cause, and, as we should think, a feminine insight into men's weakness for grace and beauty, and their utter blindness to what may lie underneath a fair outside. We do not think young people often reach such an absolute deadness, but they not seldom approach nearer to it—to circumscribing every interest into 'a narrow fantastic calculation of their own pleasures and pains,' than, looking into their clear eyes and candid brows, we could suppose. And the picture of beautiful Hetty may furnish a lesson to many who seem to assume that youth has, in virtue of its innocence, an inexhaustible stock of goodness which nothing can spoil; and may therefore be safely left to a selfish appropriation of every amusement and indulgence that falls in its way.

As for Hetty's delineation as a work of art, we can hardly over-estimate it. We realize her beauty—we see her that Sunday morning, fresh and radiant for church; when, if ever a girl was made of roses, that girl was Hetty. Her naughty tempers only make her the prettier, like a kitten setting up its back. We watch her through the strange mysteries of that secret toilet before the old mirror; we follow her in her stately walk of exultant vanity, and feel that 'it would be impossible to be wise on the subject of ear-rings,' as we see these potent stimulants to vanity glittering in her ears and enhancing her beauty. We understand the power of her wily blandishments over her poor duped honest lover,—for beauty is in itself an education, and gives the knowledge which is power. And we enter, too, into the additional narrowness of heart that ignorance will induce. Hetty's plotting, scheming little brain knew nothing of romances. She had never shared the fancied sorrows of others; and we back the selfishness of a non-novel reading flirt for concentration and pitilessness against the world. When her misery and shame come upon her, we comprehend what they must be to a mind, which had no desires out of the world's estimation, and

whose whole world was centred in one little spot ; for the narrower our range of acquaintance and knowledge, thought and imagination, the greater power *shame* has upon us. Geographically, the world is a large place, to most of us it is circumscribed enough ; and to some all their world is the village, the street, the court in which they live. No other eyes, opinions, or judgments are thought of than are comprised within their narrow bounds. Thus when Hetty 'looked out from her secret misery towards the possibility of her acquaintance ever knowing what had happened, it was as the sick and weary prisoner might think of the possible pillory. They would think her conduct shameful, and shame was torture, "that was poor little Hetty's conscience."'

And with this poor little trivial soul, the noble, high-minded hero of the piece falls in love : on her he fastens his heart. 'Of course,' says the author, with, surely, feminine satire, 'of course, I know that, as a rule, sensible men fall in love with the most sensible women of their acquaintance, see through all the pretty deceits of coquettish beauty, never imagine themselves loved where they are not loved, cease to love on all proper occasions, marry the woman most fitted for them on every occasion ;' but Adam is admitted to be an exception to this general law, and perhaps we feel his mistake more natural, as certainly more possible to sympathise with, than his second choice, the fair Methodist preacher. For it is very true, that when men of feeling fall in love with beauty it is as a symbol of goodness and truth.

'Hetty's face had a language that transcended her feelings. There are faces that nature charges with a meaning and pathos not belonging to the single human soul that flutters beneath them, but speaking the joys and sorrows of foregone generations—eyes that tell of deep love which doubtless has been, and is somewhere, but not paired with those eyes—perhaps paired with pale eyes that can say nothing, just as a national language may be instinct with poetry, unfelt by the lips that use it.'

Where a Methodist preacher is heroine, the question of religion must be more predominant than it is usually permitted to be in a novel ; but 'Adam Bede' is an embodiment of the author's whole experience, and he has taken his own line of what is eligible and suitable. Dinah, then, represents the religious principle as Adam does conscience, and, as far as general acceptance goes, is a success : but for ourselves she wants the weight of that reality which distinguishes the rest. She is a spirit amongst bodies of flesh and blood. As the saying now is—we do not believe in her. It is not that she is too good. There are women as self-denying, as humble, as sympathising, as gracious, as full of all womanly and housewifely accomplish-

ments, but we do not think they preach. We are not here entering into the question of their right to preach ; but the woman who is impelled to such utterances is absorbed by them ; her mind will be diverted into one channel ; her strictly feminine duties will be a work of principle not of congenial, natural occupation. The author labours to make Dinah one of the group, and represents her—what such a woman would not be,—at *home* amongst them. She would be more so if her character were more tinged by her opinions. Of course a young woman enthusiastic enough to *preach* would be witnessing and testifying in private life, and either converting or making herself intolerable to the people about her ; but though she uses some Methodist phrases, she has little of the animus of that sect in her : she is liberal, eclectic, enlightened, independent, and therefore unreal. Something is wanting to make us understand how such very natural people can be at their ease in that restrained demure presence. Except for the subtle delight old Lisbeth found in tormenting her younger son, we don't follow her pertinacious determination to get her for Adam. Mrs. Poyser's coruscations of splenetic humour play round her ; but they don't fit, they neither amuse, rouse, nor irritate her. Mrs. Poyser, to be sure, is one of those who can speak their minds without the necessity for sympathy ; and her opinions are too decided to need support from without. She would be awed by Dinah no more than by the old squire. Her view of Methodism was a fixed idea, of which she liked to deliver herself. The eccentricities of spiritual natures could find no opening to her cold common sense.

“ Direction ! ” she exclaims ; “ when there's a bigger maggot than usual in your head you call it direction, and then nothing can stir you. You're like the statty i' the outside o' Treddles'on Church, a starin' and a smilin' whether it's fair weather or foul.” —Vol. i. p. 144.

But all strictness found something akin to her nature ; so we understand her respecting the rigid attire and abjuring of recreation ; and there is a touch of quaint humility, not foreign to the practical before the spiritual mind, in her estimate of a pure presence.

‘ An' she makes one feel safer when she's i' the house, for she's like the driven snow, anybody might sin for two as had her at their elbow.’ —Vol. iii. p. 282.

We do not deny that Dinah is a beautiful creation, but the other inmates of Hayslope are something too genuine for such complimentary holiday terms. Then Dinah's sermon, eloquent and good in itself, does not strike us as probable under the circumstances—not what a woman would preach, though very

like what the author would work out in his closet. Its plan is the result of reasoning, not impulse; what a person would write who had studied the line taken by St. Paul in his sermon to the Athenians. A woman of Dinah's class and views would have begun at once to assert some leading truth of the gospel, not have led up to it by the gradual process of proving God's providential care and our inborn consciousness of the being of a God. And so in the very beautiful prayer in Hetty's cell, the author's own method of reasoning (as in the apostrophe, 'She cries to me, thy weak creature! Saviour, it is a blind cry to thee,') is more apparent than the actual train of thought likely to direct Dinah.

Seth, the other exponent of the purely spiritual element in religion, is, we think, a natural impersonation, but it is rather at the expense of his dignity. The author's sympathies are not at work as in the delineation of his brother. His heart goes with the man whose work had always been part of his religion, and 'who from very early days saw clearly that good carpentry was God's will—was that form of God's will that most nearly concerned him,—not with the meditative, devotional type.' The value of Seth's wonderful forbearance and long-suffering under his mother's uniform partiality and disparagement is lowered by a want of firmness and decision, of edge and vigour. The endurance is partly physical, his spirituality a constitutional bent. We do not pity him as we ought under old Lisbeth's shameful treatment and poignant injuries, because perhaps he does not feel them poignantly; lost in meditations which his practical brother could only patronise. 'Th' lad liked to sit full o' thoughts he could give no account of; they'd never come t' anything, but they made him happy.'

Nor though Methodism, as it was seen rousing the lethargy of that age, is made to occupy the highest religious ground, does it receive the sanction either of suiting the noblest, firmest, most practical class of minds, or of success. Adam marries Dinah, but does not hear her preach; the author feels he must call in an Order of Conference to stop these effusions, rather than lower his supremacy by such a domestic anomaly. And while there are allusions to the work done in the first stage of Methodism as distinguished from its modern development, it is not represented as falling in with that phase of life with which the author is familiar. Dinah's one convert, Chad's Bess—that Bess whose first puzzled speculation had been what pleasure and satisfaction there could be in life to a young woman who wore a cap like Dinah's—needs much supervision, and elicits Mrs. Poyser's assurance 'that she'll be flaunting i' new finery

three weeks after she's gone, and no more go on in her new ways without watching, than a dog'll stand on its hind legs when there's nobody' looking.' No; it is our church, our establishment, with all the moss and lichen of its antiquity upon it undisturbed by modern influences, that has his heart. The mellowing sunshine of memory dwells on some past scene of perfect harmony and fitness between pastor and flock; and though the reason says that things may and really have changed for the better, the whole soul of the writer is bent in raising such an image of peace and genial associations, that the reader is forced to regret, with even poignant longing, that the modern march of events is sweeping away the realities of such scenes; that there can be no Mr. Irwines now, the times won't admit it; and certainly no Joshua Ranns; no such churches, for they would be restored; no such sonorous choirs, because an harmonium and a chorus of Sunday scholars would have taken their place; no wail of old Psalm tunes, 'because, like the pipe of Pan, such melodies have died out with the ears that love to listen to them,' and the severe style has superseded them; and, finally, we fear no such large array of comely rustic faces, which too probably are engulfed by the Methodist and Baptist meetings.

It is well to reclaim from the past such a portrait as Mr. Irwine's: his faults are not the faults of our day; his merits are worth study, if it will teach how he knit himself into the affections of his flock. The portrait altogether charms by its harmony; whether we ought or not we pity these simple people when the change of dynasty comes, and they exchanged all that he was supposed to want for all he had;—the difference so aptly summed up by Mrs. Poyser: 'Mr. Irwine was like a good meal o' victual, you were the better for him without thinking on it. Mr. Ryde was like a dose o' physic; he griped you and worreted you, and after all he left you much the same.' There is the frank admission of failure in some essentials, but what he did teach went home. His presence inspired confidence, and was in itself a kind of teaching. 'It is summut like,' says Mrs. Poyser, 'to see such a man as that i' the desk of a Sunday! as I say to Poyser, it's like looking at a full crop o' wheat, or a pasture with a fine dairy o' cows in it. It makes you think the world's comfortable like;' or as old Bartle Massey expresses it,—'Ay, ay, he's good metal, he gives the right ring when you try him, our parson does.' It is not amiss, in the self-complacency of the present age, to have what we feel a true portrait from the old 'dead' time, reversing some of our ideas. Perhaps it is hardly fair to dwell too much on that other distinction, that if

his doctrine was not as high as other people's, yet 'he acted pretty much up to what he said; he didn't set up for being so different from other folks one day, and then be as like 'em as two peas the next;' because, of course, the higher the standard the more risk there is of falling off; but this is one of the hits on clerical matters which we have noticed, as well as the further one on the prevailing ignorance of common things in merely professional clergy, contrasted with Mr. Irwine's quickness and general knowledge: 'I've always mistrusted that sort o' learning as leaves folks foolish and unreasonable about business:' though no doubt this ignorance does imply want of sympathy and an undue selfish absorption in our own particular pursuits.

The state of religious intelligence in a rural population must have been subject for speculation to so keen an observer. His conclusions would not satisfy the abstract requirements of a theologian, but he carries his reader along with him in his charitable solutions of a difficulty: showing light where the form may be indefinite, and putting a pious interpretation on many an ignorant heterodoxy; as where Lisbeth at her husband's funeral

'Had a vague belief that the psalm was doing him good; it was part of that decent burial which she would have thought it a greater wrong to withhold from him, than to have caused him many unhappy days while he was living. The more there was said about her husband, the more there was done for him; surely the safer he would be. It was poor Lisbeth's blind way of feeling that human love and pity are a ground of faith in some other love.'—Vol. ii. p. 49.

Or in Bess Cranage's ritualistic view of her deficiencies—

'She had always been considered a naughty girl. She was conscious of it. If it was necessary to be very good, she must be in a bad way. She couldn't find her places at church as Sally Rann could; she had often been tittering when she eurcheyed to Mr. Irwine.'—Vol. i. p. 47.

And Joshua Rann's church principles pass without a protest from his pastor because he knew that something deeper remained unexpressed.

'I like a pint wi' my pipe an' a neighbourly chat at Mester Casson's now an' then, for I was brought up i' the church, thank God! and ha' been parish clerk this two an' thirty year. I should know what the church religion is.'

Even Adam's love for the church service is not allowed to be the consent of his reason after study and reflection, for here association comes in—'The secret of our emotions never lies on the bare object but on its subtle relations to our own past'—a sentiment which throws light on the author's entire views on such things.

We do not know whether our literature anywhere possesses such a closely true picture of purely rural life as 'Adam Bede' presents. Every class that makes up a village community has its representative; and not only is the dialect of the locality accurately given but the distinct inflection of each order. The field labourer's rude utterance, 'as incapable of an under tone as a cow or a stag,' receives a touch of cultivation when it is used by the mechanic; and these two, again, are varied in the farmhouse; while each individual has appropriate peculiarities which give a distinct truth of portraiture. No person, we apprehend, can be an adept in minute observation of character, or, at least, in delineating it, without a correct ear and a good verbal memory. When we have a distinct idea of the words people will use, we are led to a clearer notion of the range of their ideas; accuracy in expression secures an amount of accuracy of thought. And well does the midland county dialect come out in this its first appearance, as far as we know, as a written language: how faithfully it expresses both pathos, common sense, and humour! On Adam's lips how forcible, on Mrs. Poyser's tongue how pungent, in old Lisbeth how querulous! All these niceties of observation show themselves in the differences of intellect and cultivation which each calling develops. What a stride there is between the village mechanic and the village labourer! How sharp, intelligent, and ready does the former become under the constant demand on his resources! for it is well known that a really clever rustic workman is the best and most inventive man in his trade; the most equal to all its demands, the most capable of profiting by new advantages. Adam is a picture of a good country carpenter as well as of a good man. And what truth in the various labourers, influenced as each is by his calling! Alick the foreman, to whom we are first introduced eating cold beans with his pocket-knife with so much relish: a saturnine character with a 'ventral laugh;' whose honest parsimony made him feed the poultry with small handfuls because large ones affected him painfully with a sense of profusion; who spent his life in a kind of dull rivalry with his kind, and especially with 'Tim,' the two who lived together, and yet, as labourers only can, rarely spoke to each other, and never looked at each other even over their dish of cold potatoes; and who was of opinion

'That church, like other luxuries, was not to be indulged in often by a foreman who had the weather and the ewes on his mind. "Church! nay, I'n gotten summat else to think on," was an answer he often uttered in a tone of bitter significance that silenced further question.'—Vol. ii. p. 20.

Old Kester Bale, who knew the 'natur' of all farming work, and used to worship his own skill in his curtseying survey of well-thatched ricks every Sunday morning. Ben Tholoway, the one pilferer that infests all farms, whose master did wisely to be lenient, for 'Ben's views of depredation were narrow; the house of correction might have enlarged them.' With what truth and humour is the harvest-supper described, with how strong a sympathy for the occasion! Hot roast beef we are made to feel as sublime a thing as these men must feel it, who, every day in the year except Sunday, eat their dinner cold under a hedge. And the silence! the real business of the occasion too serious for a divided attention, 'even if these farm labourers had anything to say, which they had not.' The harvest song, and the thumping, and the subsequent slow unthawing under the influence of the ale! The first vain efforts for a song! The 'Come, Tim' to the bashful minstrel seized by the company as a 'conversational opportunity,' and echoed all round the table: for everybody could say 'Come, Tim!' Tim's surly sheepishness, and next the whole party very much in earnest to hear David's song till it was clear the lyrism of the evening was as yet in the cellar! Its final release from that confinement, Tim and David singing at once, till—

'Old Kester, with an entirely unmoved and immoveable aspect, suddenly set up a quavering treble, as if he had been an alarum, and the time was come for him to go off.'—Vol. iii. p. 308.

The whole picture is real in every detail, and in its place inappreciable, relieving the reader after the too-painful scenes which precede it.

There is a dance, too, in another part of the story with which we sympathise: of course a country dance, so dear to memory—a 'glorious country dance, best of all dances'—the dance bewailed in many a tender elegy, which, if the pen of genius could be allowed a voice, would again be in the ascendant. 'Pity it was not a boarded floor, then the rhythmic stamping of the thick shoes would have been better than drums.' That merry stamping, that gracious nodding of the head, that waving bestowal of the hand, where can we see them now?

But all the author's humour centres in Mrs. Poyser, a new development of an old type. Mrs. Poyser never tries to amuse: she is the veriest utilitarian in her profession, and takes too business-like a view of life for smiles in her own person, or for any sanction of them in others. We almost apologise to her for finding mere diversion in so much cool, caustic, good sense. Indeed, her power lies in denuding everything of adventitious

distinction, of its merely ornamental character, and reducing it to its first principles. Hetty's beauty is a constant mark for her analysis: 'she is no better nor a cherry wi' a hard stone inside.' Her pretty tasteful finery is 'rags.' 'It's what *rag* she can get to stick on her as she's thinking on from morning till night.' Whatever is not useful is worthless in her eyes, as she objects to lap-dogs because they are good neither for 'butchers' meat nor barking.' She is perpetually tracing things to their causes—to that *inside* which no fair exterior can divert from her thoughts. No dignity can live through the licence of her tongue: some apt but derogatory comparison will surely drag it through the mire. She is more than equal, she is mistress of every occasion, superior to every antagonist: her tongue is always trenchant, inexorable, always conqueror. We begin by pitying her maids, that 'Molly,' whose first hiring and widowed mother are perpetually cast up at her; that 'poor two-fisted thing' whose 'equils for awkwardness her mistress niver knew;' for whom she has a running lecture, which she takes up where she left it off like a tune on a barrel-organ. But we soon learn that she is no coward oppressor of the weak, and, moreover, that there is honour in furnishing a subject and matter for her inexhaustible powers of illustration. Besides, Molly is avenged: the author gives her and the reader this satisfaction in the scene of broken crockery. Mrs. Poyser may speak her mind to all the world, even to the powerful and malignant old squire, unscathed, but Molly stands on another footing. For as the exponent of certain virtues in their humblest development she is a favourite: her ready 'Lawk' in response to the children's demands for wonder and sympathy contrasts genially with Hetty's indifference to their pleasures. She is a bit of warm-hearted humanity, and on the whole valued as such. Mrs. Poyser's especial work is taking down pretension and resisting encroachment: she is merciful where her rights are acknowledged. Her husband knows this, and has an easy life of it—shaking with silent laughter at her sallies, winking to his allies when she arouses to action, and enjoying her successes, even when they risk his interests. Now and then she sets him down, but he takes it meekly, as when he ventures to hint, 'Thee 'dst be as angry as could be wi' me if I said a word against anything she did;' and she replies, 'Because you'd very like be finding fault wi'out reason. But there's reason i' what I say else I should na say it.' Many a good thing does she pour into his ear in compensation for his forbearance. If she despises all mankind she despises him least: he is slow of speech to be sure, 'but what he says he'll stand by'; and as for slowness, 'the men are

mostly so tongue-tied that you're forced partly to guess what they mean like the dumb animals.' Her line is never complimentary, but her husband must appreciate the implied homage in her question—'Where's the use of a woman having brains of her own, if she's tackled to a geck as everybody's a laughing at? She might as well dress herself fine and sit back'ards on a donkey.' Herself a pattern of stability, subversion of natural order is her type of weakness. 'The right end up'ards' is strength and prosperity; a foolish wife is 'your head in a bog, and when it's there, your heels (in the shape of unprofitable short horns) may as well go after it.' And the excuse of bad managers, who say the weather's in fault, is dismissed with 'as there's folks 'ud stand on their heads, and then say the fault was in their boots.'

Mrs. Poyser's readiness at illustration is too much a peculiarity of the author's own for us to suppose it borrowed from another. All his characters are rich in this gift, but he has done well to show it in its efflorescence, where the vigour and independence of a farmer's wife's position gives it a natural home and affords it such an infinite variety of material. A woman has no better field than a dairy farm for the exercise of her own especial gifts, and may develop into anything when, as Mrs. Poyser says, she earns half and saves half the rent; while the consciousness of usefulness in the great primitive occupation of mankind gives a certain dignity which no other calling imparts. She controls the fate and destiny of so many animate and inanimate things, and is always face to face with the productive powers of nature. And how well the sense of responsibility is conveyed! We quite understand what it must be to lie awake with twenty gallons of milk on the mind; and when her keen forethought raises the picture of 'Bethel with his horse and cart coming about the back places, and making love to both the gells at once,' we see it all, and agree with her 'that if we are to go to ruin it shanna be wi' having our back kitchen turned into a public.' And after all, in spite of the rough rind, how genial she is! with her mother's love for Totty, that perfect type of farmhouse infancy; with her wifely pleasure in setting out her plentiful table for her husband, his father, and his friends; with her calm satisfaction watching the cattle in that cheery scene, the farmyard, so dear to this author, whose keen observation has been busy many a time taking in the meaning and causes of its seeming hubbub and confusion, and tracing effects to their causes just as keenly as though a human heart were depicted. We see Mrs. Poyser serenely knitting at her door as the evening bustle begins, the patient beasts running confusedly into the wrong places; for the

alarming din of the bull-dog was mingled with more distant sounds, the tremendous crack of the waggoner's whip which the timid feminine creatures, with pardonable superstition, imagined to have some relation to their own movements; the silly 'calves;' the ducks drinking dirty water, to get a drink with as much body in it as possible; the strong-minded donkey; Marty wickedly provoking the gander by hissing at him;—every stroke of the picture is by a sure and loving hand, and gives an intense reality to the human life it surrounds. The scenes of Sunday peace in village and farmhouse are as feelingly true in the days of old Sunday leisure thus commemorated—

'Surely all leisure is hurry, compared with a sunny walk through the fields from "afternoon church," as such walks used to be in those old leisurely times, when the boat, gliding sleepily along the canal, was the newest locomotive power; when Sunday books had most of them old brown leather covers, and opened with remarkable precision always in one place.'—Vol. iii. p. 288.

The blacksmith's Sunday clean face is recorded, which always made his little grand-daughter cry at him as a stranger; and 'Timothy's Bess' standing at her own door nursing her baby, while others went to church, 'feeling, as women do in that position, that nothing else can be expected of them;' and indoors where the clock is ticking in a peaceful Sunday manner, and the very stones and tubs seemed quieter than usual, and the water gently dripping from the pump is distinctly heard. Queen and controller of such a world, Mrs. Poyser, in spite of the weight on her shoulders and the hard work on her hands, ought to be and is a happy woman. That she is an arrogant one, confident first in the superiority of the female sex, and next in her supremacy over all other females, is perhaps true; but conceit in her case is imposing: the author elsewhere, and on other subjects, shows the petty side of this quality; for which he has an agreeable, sly appreciation in every phase and aspect, from the pragmatical parade of knowledge in the Scotch gardener, to the condescension which led Arthur to put on his uniform to please the tenants (we are told 'he had not the least objection to gratify them in this way, as the uniform was very advantageous to his figure'), and the act of generous forethought of Joshua Rann, who had 'provided himself with his fiddle in case any one should have a sufficiently pure taste to prefer dancing to a solo on that instrument.' Not that we are allowed to laugh superciliously at *his* rustic vanities, for Joshua has an ear both for reading and music, and the author is not more aristocratic than nature herself.

'This may seem a strange mode of speaking about the reading of a parish clerk, a man in rusty spectacles, with stubbly hair, a large occiput, and a prominent crown; but that is nature's way. She will allow a gentleman with a splendid physiognomy and poetic aspirations to sing wofully out of tune, and not give him the slightest hint of it, and takes care that some narrow-browed fellow trolling a ballad in the corner of a pot-house shall be as true to his intervals as a bird.'—Vol. ii. p. 48.

We have assumed in our readers a knowledge of the plot, for it is too late to introduce this popular tale to their attention; our part has rather been to look for the source of its interest and the qualities and aims of its author. Though the story sometimes flags, and the plot has its weak points, it is effective for its purpose of delineating character; and we have few scenes more telling, few situations more original and striking in the conception than the battle in the wood between Adam and Arthur—the real scene of Arthur's punishment and humiliation—in which the author satisfies his demand for justice; for as for his subsequent years of expatriation and repentance, our experience of life tells us that such expiations are not undertaken by the Arthurs of real life; but the battle, the blow, the vengeance, might be and are facts to our apprehension and consent; so fully is all worked out; the transitions of feelings; the conflicts between new and old sensations; the alternation of rage on the first discovery of the lovers, with Adam's horror when he thought he had killed his rival; the concentration in the present as he feebly recovers; the affectionate tender attentions; the inevitable walk arm-in-arm; the returning memory and mistrust. Two persons are seldom brought together in a more striking and critical situation; the reader's sympathy alternates between the actors with the liveliest curiosity; events, and the emotions consequent on them, succeed one another in what we feel a natural order; we read with a growing confidence in the author's mastery of the position he has imagined. And Adam's passionate appeals for justice, when the terrible truth is forced upon him, are of equal power, and have a real weight on the reader. To how many cases are they not applicable? 'Is he to go free while they lay all the punishment upon her, so weak and young? I'll go to him; I'll bring him back; I'll make him look at her in her misery. He shall look at her till he can't forget it: it shall follow him night and day—as long as he lives it shall follow him; he shan't escape wi' lies this time!' Hetty's wanderings, too, the fascination of her dreaded home, her confession, are all-engrossing; and all the author's pity and tenderness are lavished on Adam, in the prostration of strong and generous nature under an overwhelming calamity. There is courage as well as truth to nature in allowing him to

recover from such a blow. It is the pleasure of ordinary romance to represent the finer clay of humanity as so susceptible of sorrow that a blow to the tenderer affections is final—there is no rising again from it; the victim lives, perhaps, but is never suffered again to enjoy life. No second morn may light up the heaven of heroes and heroines. All our experience tells us it is not so; all of us have witnessed and blessed the inherent power of reaction in a healthy nature; and the author of 'Adam Bede,' because he knows it to be so, has not only restored Adam to serenity, but has made him happy in a second attachment, concluding some very tender and just thoughts on the work sorrow is designed to achieve, with the counsel which may be received as the watchword and motive of his story. 'Let us rather be thankful that our sorrow lives as an indestructible force, only changing its form as forces do, passing from pain to sympathy, the one poor word which includes all our best insight and our best love.'

In passing on to the forcible, spirited story of 'The Bertrams,' we enter upon a wholly different class of fiction, derived from quite another source; for if it is the aim of the loftier race of novelists to show us the universal brotherhood of human kind, that there are common sympathies which unite us all, that even where some resist and others yield to temptation, there is still that affinity which makes the one understand something of the other's trial, and therefore suffers tenderness to modify indignation and censure; there is another, not on the whole less popular class, whose talent lies in exhibiting in their extremest divergence the differences between man and man, who take them up where their line of action sets them widest apart, and portray them in their contrasts. Such of our readers as like to keep themselves *au courant* in light literature must be already well acquainted with the points of Mr. Trollope's style. However many novels we read, however quickly in some season of healthful idleness we sip these flowers of fancy, till the exact flavour and form of each blossom is lost in a general sense of not unpleasing satiety, there will still stand out one or two, prominent for force, grace, or some other felicitous peculiarity from its fellows; so that the mere mention of the title shall bring back a distinct, substantial group of characters with their names, qualities, doings, and connection with each other clearly defined, out of the confused crowd of shadows mixed pell-mell in our brain; quickly receding, not only from our sympathies but our remembrance altogether. So honoured, so recalled, so distinguished will be Mr. Trollope's vigorous creations

after ever so persevering a course of novel-reading. Who, for example, that has read 'Barchester Towers,' will dis sever Archdeacon Grantley from Mr. Slope, or Bishop Proudie from his wife? or have forgotten the struggle for mastery which engaged them in the common battle? This gift of setting people together by the ears, of exhibiting human nature in its warlike, antagonistic aspect, contending for a prize, for mastery of some sort—self against self, in some of the innumerable forms in which that battle is fought, is his speciality. The sound of the trumpet rouses him to his best efforts, sets his corps of actors firm on their feet, stirs them into nature, point, and an ingenuous display of their several qualities for the reader's interest and amusement. In his former novels party spirit has been a main impulse—a passion which Mr. Trollope draws with a master hand, and with all the energy of a partisan. Not without candour, for he is keen-sighted to the faults of all sides, and has little faith in pure unmixed motives—but with a zest for its extravagancies, and a sympathy in its manifestations, which he imparts to his reader, who finds himself sharing in and approving excesses, so as to be more diverted than protesting when some one-sided picture of grasping, hypocritical selfishness meets his match, rousing his antagonist to recoil, and loathing expressed in solemn, neatly turned, well-kept vows 'never again to touch the paw of that most impure and filthy animal,' the able clerical leader of the opposite interest.

In 'The Bertrams,' instead of the old question how to get power and preferment, its characters are engaged in the lay rendering of the same problem—which has divided Mr. Trollope's attention with the former—how to get on in the world. The individual's struggle with society is his theme, the characteristics which secure success and failure his study; and he prefers to draw man the creature of circumstances, led by temporary aims, rather than in that attitude of defying and controlling them, which constitutes the hero. Probably he would argue that it is thus human nature has shown itself to him, and that every course of action is moulded by events; but, nevertheless, a good fiction should offer us some point of stability, something for us to trust. It is the defect of 'The Bertrams' that it nowhere furnishes this stay. The plot itself would be less desultory, the parts would have more cohesion, as it seems, if this main want were supplied, for the author would have something more of a purpose: as it is, the success of this really clever book depends but little on our regard for its characters. It is impossible for our sympathy to be keenly wrought upon by the fortunes of persons who either have no fixed object at all beyond a general

desire of making a figure in the world, or who are influenced solely by self-interest. The course of the hero, so to call him, is a perpetual conquest of the actual over the ideal—a continual abandonment of preconceived plans or aims to some present temptation; of which we have an early example suggested by the author's own experiences of travel. These he has incorporated into his novel, rather to the detriment of both, though the descriptions are given with much spirit. After a successful university career, Bertram recruits his powers by a journey to the Holy Land. Full of devout aspirations he approaches Jerusalem, but enters its sacred walls cursing and swearing from the discomforts of a Turkish saddle. This is a type of his course, and perhaps what Mr. Trollope would maintain is the type of many a real course which has begun in lofty aims and sunk under mean temptations. It prefigures in Bertram his lapse into infidelity, and his career of sceptical authorship into which he fell simply because things did not go smoothly in his long engagement with the heroine.

Tempers and tendencies like these are not to be cured by an early marriage as our author would seem to imply, especially not by a union with such a woman as Caroline Waddington, the '*primitissima donna*' of the story, on whose delineation the author has expended much pains and skill, to result in as unpleasing, we might almost say, repulsive a picture of womanhood as even in these days often fills the part of heroine. We are convinced Mr. Trollope does not know *how* unpleasant and bad he makes her, being misled by what we think a very common mistake, an especial tenderness for hard characters if they have only a soft place somewhere about them. We own we feel very little sympathy either in books or in real life for the class of persons who have feeling and heart, in spite of their endeavours to suppress them; who, from some awkward resistance in their mechanism, cannot be quite as worldly and hard as they desire to be. That excuse so often made for harsh and selfish characters, that they have feeling if it could only be reached, that they have a heart if they would allow it to be touched, ought really to go for less than nothing, for it proves that they are hard deliberately and by intention; that if they have feeling they must have still more rigidity, obstinacy, and self-will to nullify it. We repeat, we value little that tenderness that can only be awakened on extreme and mostly selfish occasions; that is stirred unwillingly, and subsides again into coldness with a sort of resentment at the unwonted and involuntary disturbance; that is an affair simply of organization, and is betrayed in spite of the will. The affections were given for every-day use, and unless they are carefully

fostered will die out of most of us much sooner than we are aware. So though this sort of people will always hold their place and value in fiction from the opportunity they furnish for exciting scenes, and from the pleasure we all find in resistance overcome, in seeing people moved against their will, and tender in spite of violent struggles, we hold them a thankless, ungrateful, and barren soil on which to bestow actual love and regard; those who till it will never get the value of their seed back again. Mr. Trollope really knows all this, and gives poor Bertram only tares for his good wheat; but still he is taken with the picture he has drawn. There has been amusement in making a girl of twenty prematurely worldly, calculating her chances like a stock-jobber, keeping a sharp look-out on her own feelings, and placing affection third in her scale of necessities in marriage. There is an effect of strength in so much self-control, joined to a Juno presence and grand style of beauty; and she is well done, and therefore not without moral value. Mere pride and self-appreciation are poor safeguards when they are set to do the work of principle; thought for others, not selfish concern for our own interests, is the true defence against the shock of passion and all the various temptation it brings in its train. So our heroine, after breaking her lover's heart by obduracy, when tenderness and concession were called for—and the scene of their angry parting is full of nature and feeling, the author's heart is in the conflict of wounded affection on the one side, and sullen pride on the other—abandons herself to sentiment when reserve and coldness is her duty, when, having married in pique for the indulgence of her ambition, return to her old love is a crime. On this husband, Bertram's treacherous friend, the author lavishes all his virtuous indignation, though he is only the unscrupulous, worldly person Caroline tries with all her might to be;—she whose first reflection after her break with her lover had been that she had lost three years of her youth: 'her doctrine had been to make the most of the world, she had early resolved not to throw away either herself or her chances.' And for her we are expected to sympathise, because she could not maintain this detestable vein of reasoning; because 'while she said to herself this was her worst grief, there was more of humanity in her, of the sweetness of womanly humanity than she was aware.' We consider Harcourt to be ill-used; that is, he can be made as bad as the author chooses; but the class of whom he is the type, men intent on getting on in the world, and with no keen feelings to keep them back, do not deserve this fate. It is a mere accident of nerves and sex and beauty which makes the author prefer Caroline; there is no difference in principle as far as actions

show principle. Yet Harcourt is got rid of by a fate which is not congenial certainly with his temperament, that Caroline may marry Bertram at last, and the story 'end well' as the saying is. The author is a little ashamed of his weakness, and represents a saddened hearth and joyless home; but this 'ending well' is a sort of necessity, as young readers have a way of looking to the end of the third volume before they venture their feelings on a novel; and if they are to be harrowed by a tragical conclusion will bestow their sympathies elsewhere.

We are tempted to extract a few words of advice on the subject of angry letters, for their practical good sense, though as an excuse for the heroine's conduct we do not accept them—

'Heaven defend me from angry letters! They should never be written unless to schoolboys and men at college, and not often to them if they be any way tender-hearted. This, at least, should be a rule through the letter-writing world: that no angry letter should be posted till four-and-twenty hours shall have elapsed since it was written. We all know how absurd is that other rule, that of saying the alphabet when you are angry. Trash! Sit down and write your letter; write it with all the venom in your power, spit out your spleen at the fullest, 'twill do you good. You think you have been injured, say all that you can say, with all your poisoned eloquence, and gratify yourself with reading it while your temper is hot: then put it in your desk; and as a matter of course burn it before breakfast the following morning. Believe me that you will then have a double gratification.'—Vol. ii. p. 59.

The story—in pursuance of its avowed moral involved in the advice to young ladies not to think overmuch of their lovers' income, 'he that is true and honest will not have to beg his bread, neither his nor yours'—has a counter pair of lovers, the lady, of the devoted unselfish class, 'willing to marry on potatoes, and herself to eat the parings.' Their difficulty is an ingenious one connected with the author's large observation on the question of preferment. It introduces the reader to a very clever sketch of character—a cross-grained nobleman forced to oblige somebody by giving away a living, and therefore hampering the gift with unpleasant conditions. His suspicion of claims of all sorts is very well given, and often seen where power is in churlish hands.

' "You distinctly understand that your mother has no claim on me."
 "Surely, none has been put forward, Lord Stapledean." "I don't say it has; but you may perhaps fancy by what I say, that I myself admit that there is a claim. Mind; I do no such thing, not in the least." "I quite understand what you mean." . . . "Why should I give you five hundred a year? Eh? tell me that. Why should I nominate a young man like you to such a living? you whom I never saw in my life? tell me that." '—Vol. i. p. 60.

As a connecting link between very incongruous persons and

places, the story is enlivened by a spirited old maid, Miss Todd, an example of the author's vein of humour. She is valuable to him here as a medium for his favourite sport of destroying illusions. We first become acquainted with her in the Holy Land, and it is she who plans a pic-nic in the Valley of Jehoshaphat (afterwards recalled in her Littlebath soirées as 'Jehoshaphat, dear Jehoshaphat'!) which gives occasion for a hundred collisions of modern trivial incidents with sacred and venerable localities. These incongruities have some of the startling effects of wit, and raise a smile against our will. We know, too, that they must happen in actual travel, and probably happened, or something like them, to Mr. Trollope; but we who stay at home hardly thank him for colouring our grave though vague ideas of these scenes with flippant or vulgar associations. He inculcates the lesson, whether designedly or not, that these are not the days for pilgrimages; that the modern spirit is too much absorbed in the present for faith or reverence to be fostered by mere localities; and that, in fact, the attempt is a hardening process, for every one of his characters is rather the worse for the experiment. Miss Todd, therefore, is on more congenial ground at the author's favourite watering-place of Littlebath, the various phases of whose society have occupied a good deal of his attention, not, of course, excluding its clergy. But here the general and indiscriminate satire frustrates itself. We have Mr. O'Callaghan, the head curate, laughed at for objecting to cards, and then a party of card-playing old ladies described with much spirit, as such a scene of superannuated gambling, ill-temper, and selfishness, as justifies a universal clerical raid against the practice. But for this pitiful exhibition of their actual working, Miss Todd's arguments in favour of cards would certainly have weight with reasonable people. She has boldly invited Mr. O'Callaghan to her party—who, by the way, is represented as so unsophisticated in his tastes, as still to be open, after the pattern of all conventional curates, to the simple seductions of tea and muffins—and thus addresses him while the whist-tables are forming—

“I fear you do not approve of cards?” said Miss Todd. “Approve! Oh no, how can I approve of them, Miss Todd?” “Well, I do with all my heart. What are old women like us to do? We haven't eyes to read at night, even if we had minds fit for it. We can't always be saying our prayers. We have nothing to talk about except scandal. It's better than drinking; and we should come to that if we had't cards.” “Oh, Miss Todd!” “You see you have your excitement in preaching, Mr. O'Callaghan,” &c.—Vol. p. ii. 156.

It is part of the general want of method and plot that there are chapters of farce—and we have noticed this elsewhere in

Mr. Trollope's writings—enacted by new characters, which do not advance the story a step, and which might be omitted by the reader without his being sensible of any hiatus. The flirtations of two widows in the homeward-bound steamer from Calcutta are of this sort, and give an impression of vulgarity quite at variance with the general tone of the book. In the ordinary dialogue the diction is antithetical, pointed, and well-turned, and so tinged by the author's experience as to be scarcely natural, though in harmony with his ideas of the speaker. Caroline thus neatly defines her state of feeling on an unexpected proposal. 'As you demand an immediate answer I must give you one. I have had much pleasure in your society, but I have never thought of loving you, nor can I love you without thinking of it.' This style accords better with the well-drawn Sir Lionel, the gentlemanly old *roué*, who delivers from the corner of his tombstone his views of a pic-nic. 'I am very fond of a pic-nic, excessively fond—I mean the eating and drinking part, of course. There is only one thing I like better, and that is having my dinner under a roof, upon a table, with a chair to sit down upon.'

A glance over any chance selection of novels of the day, brings out one fact concerning style, that a certain facility belongs to the time without any body or substance to support it. Of course it is only manner and imitation; but it is surprising with what ease, and even promise, a novel will start, which in a chapter or two degenerates into the most vapid extravagance. A writer can maintain the appearance of having something in him: liveliness, observation, knowledge of the world, from his mere participation in the general floating stock of ideas. Something like accuracy, propriety, and grace of expression, which, when real, insure some merit, are tolerably general accomplishments. An indefinite number of people, male and female, seem now able to start a novel fairly. Everybody can paint an opening landscape with a few strong, impressive borrowed touches, sketch two or three characters with smartness and animation, give a few sentences of sprightly dialogue, scatter some caustic allusions to the world and its ways, impart so agreeable an aspect of life and vivacity, as shall stimulate the reader to persevere, till in a few pages a collapse comes, manners and sense, and too often morals, fail at once from mere weakness of the creative faculty. Misled by the power of beginning—which is just what modern training imparts—the ambitious Icarus has started on his enterprise without one real qualification, and flounders in impotent helplessness amidst a disorganized mass of crude

absurdities to the end of his task. Of this class we adduce 'Creeds' as a fair specimen. Its style is thought to show talent, and it certainly has some cleverness of the borrowed and contagious sort; but ignorance of nature, which has only been studied through French novels, and the necessity of producing something exciting without any element of originality, has produced a parody as little like life as a Hindoo idol is like a man. The author—or probably authoress—has apparently attributed some of the difficulties of composition to the old-fashioned necessity of a moral purpose, and has therefore boldly defied all prejudice in his conception of a heroine. She is constitutionally without a conscience, and acts in entire conformity with this organization. She allows one lover—an aspirant for the priesthood—to persuade her to marry a French count of fabulous vice and ugliness. She lets another absolve her from all complicity in this same count's death, though she has a distinct remembrance of first plotting his destruction, and then of allowing him to poison himself by mistake.

It may appear absurd to generalize on so ludicrous a plot as that of 'Creeds,' but it is evidently intended to hit the popular fancy for audacity and wilfulness, which it is now the fashion to consider strong-minded and heroic. Even that wilfulness which will subject itself to slavery is thought fine, if only the subjugation be voluntary and under no compulsion of duty. It is this quality which dictates Estelle's whole career. Without exactly approving her line of conduct, many fine words are lavished upon the lady's courage; her contempt of all reserve in wrong-doing is admired and attributed to a noble nature, while her 'purity and innocence' are the author's frequent theme. His definition of innocence, as far as we make it out, being—to be ready and willing to do wicked things, but not yet to have done them: this, at least, is the only moral difference we have been able to detect between one actor and another of the story. The author positively recoils from respectability. Persons influenced by the ordinary rules of propriety, who are decorous from habit as well as principle, are marks for the contempt of the finer organizations and higher interests of his fancy. Yet it is amusing to see amongst all these cynics, blundering and imitative, or otherwise, the same absolute deference to a social as opposed to a moral standard. People of this sort have really no independent opinions; their notions of happiness are bounded to an exclusive circle. Thus, though society is represented as made up of the most worthless materials, of utter selfishness set on the lowest aims, without one spark of magnanimity to relieve it, yet this author has no other idea than to plant his heroine prosperous

and triumphant as one of its leaders and ornaments. But in this particular instance we observe that the experienced critic recognises no genuine crusade against received ideas, and therefore considers grave moral censure misplaced. He goes at once to the mind of the writer, and sees there, as a ruling motive, aim at literary effect; an early attempt failing from youth and inexperience; and treats it accordingly; calmly remonstrating against the needlessly revolting character of the heroine as a mistake, and advising a better moral next time, as he might good-naturedly point out some bad trick of style to be guarded against before it grows into a habit.

In 'Trust for Trust' we have a type of an opposite class. It is a favourite speculation of the present day, that we need not go to distant times, nor to the scenes of great events, for illustration of the deeper elements of pathos and passion. The author of 'Trust for Trust' has felt this with a vengeance. If all small boroughs were like his Porchester, we need not go elsewhere for our excitements. What tumult and incident, what a stir of passion, what hair-breadth turns of fortune, what villanies, what heroism, what jealousies, illuminate the career of a banker and his wife, assisted by the town council and a few private friends — the whole plot turning on a question of road-making! Yet we immeasurably prefer this storm in a teacup—where the course of events is violently at variance with the scenes in which they are placed and all our ideas of proportion are disturbed, to the cold, vague heartlessness which has no local ties, and no home but 'society.' Indeed, though our reason and dignity now and then remonstrate, we own to being amused; we sympathise with the writer's spirit and earnestness. Spirit is everything: we can go on with an author as long as his own credulity sustains him—the credulity, we mean, of the fancy and of the spring of invention; for this writer has a fund of common sense which betrays a perception of his own burlesque, though the story carries him on with an unabated fervour of composition. In a certain sense, he writes of what he knows: the society, the interests, the politics, the humours and manners of a small town are familiar to him. The excitement and action may be overdone, but the characters are real, except one or two, who have to perpetrate the mischief of the piece, and who go about their business with rather fewer scruples than most conventional villains; and for less tangible ends. By their means all the mysteries of romance, spies, Italian maids, secret passages, life-long revenges are brought to bear on the simplest every-day affairs of life. Secret machinations in the lady's parlour, in the public-house, and over the wash-tub: walks, nurseries,

family arrangements, all matter for conspirators and plotters, and for letters to the farthest ends of the earth ; and this mainly to decide who shall be the ruling power in the corporation of Porchester ! The banker, who has set his ambitious heart on this elevation, is the subject and dupe of all the contrivance, and fills his part a little too tractably ; for there is this difference between fiction and real life, that in the world we live in, no man can be a dupe without being contemptible, whereas, from Othello downwards, the realm of romance is full of high-minded, intellectual, noble specimens of the class. There is also a rogue of the same melodramatic type who is bribed for impossible services by the two deep ones, much in the same open fashion that some people assert is adopted towards 'The Times' by those who aspire to the good word of that organ ; frankly, that is, presenting the editor with half a crown or a five-pound note, according to the value of the services required. The main merit of the story lies in the delineation of the banker's peasant wife, who stands out a very pleasing, attractive character, a very Griselda in her enduring affection, but with a dash of spirit which sets her above that ideal. She gives occasion for many pretty scenes. If a perfectly simple, correct young matron of one of our country towns could be suddenly suspected by her husband of being in love with three fellow-townsmen at once, she would do well to comport herself like Mary. In her case we put up with the singularity of the coincidence in consideration of her becoming behaviour under the trial. One element of the book's readableness is the harmony of its tone. There is a congruity in the departures from the probable. From the opening chapter, where the lover and the country girl pledge their troth amid the Welsh mountains, in the hidden presence of the five unconnected and distinct controllers of their destiny, who survey them from their separate peepholes, we are in a harmonious world, where people understand one another, and where it is not strange for such things to fall out. The author seems to have found his task a pleasant and congenial one ; and with his ready powers, and in such a mood, he is sure to find readers.

Some writers work out their drama by scenes and actions taken from the life. Miss Brontë's 'Villette' is an example of this style. The reader sees at once that M. Paul Emanuel is a real person, drawn with consummate skill and deep insight, but still a portrait. He has not passed through any chemical process of amalgamation. 'Life's Foreshadowings,' an Irish tale, is a somewhat blundering case in point : the author has evidently set himself to reproduce certain scenes and characters, and persuaded himself that a good story could be made out of the

stores of his memory, with a little help of fancy to supply connecting links and crises of fate. The opening chapters are really good, where we simply follow him through some of his actual experiences. The poacher is a capital fellow: his amusing oddities have a striking verisimilitude. But when real people are set to work out an imaginary plot, the effect is rarely harmonious; in this instance it is lame and forced in the extreme. It is a greater effort of fancy to make our acquaintances act like themselves in romantic circumstances, than if scenes and characters shared the same degree of truth! The absence of some informing power to give life and interest to the mass of incident and the laboured effort at realization are painfully evident. And yet detached passages are so good, little effects are often so true to life, and here and there a chance observation shows so much original thought—there is, in fact, so much genuineness of a painstaking, heavy sort, that though it often leads to a total want of dignity in his models, or of any quality that can win sympathy, we respect the author's motives, and read on with a determination, as it were, to make the best of it. It may be dry and it may be strained, but it is an effort of thought and not mere imitation nonsense.

From the pictures of life and society, whose aim is amusement, the transition must be abrupt and startling to a work, which, while assuming the form of romance, deals with the harsh realities which meet us in the 'Broad Arrow.' From fancied sorrows, from the conflicts of society, from the warm precincts of the cheerful day, we are there introduced to a life in extreme contrast with them all—remote from association, from hope, from ambition, from the stir of the world, and its repose—to a life where the primary conditions of existence seem to be changed, where an entirely new scene of probation is enacted. The 'Broad Arrow,' as may be gathered from the name, is a tale of convict life, from the pen of a lady whose life seems to have been passed in Tasmania amid the scenes she very vividly describes. She testifies what she has seen: there is a tone of experience, a confidence in her facts, which impart weight to her words, and at once give interest and value to her report. Keenly alive to the miseries of convict life, to the confusion and anomalies such a position excite in the heart and temper—a witness of the extravagant developments of the lower propensities and passions, where self-respect and good name are lost—she has sought to bring such a picture before the English mind as shall excite interest, and raise a question whether all is done that can be done to turn punishment to good account. No doubt the English people and the colonists have looked on the matter from distinct points of

view. We see the crime, the colonists see the punishment. A great sin is committed: death is commuted to transportation. We call it mercy; but when the criminal, at the end of a miserable voyage, arrives on new shores, he there is a man like his fellows. Persons have to inflict the chastisement who know nothing and think nothing of the offence, who only regard him as one of a class. Habit makes this easy enough to the official community, but the tender-hearted looker-on is perplexed, harassed, torn with conflicting questions. He sees a degraded class, but it seems to him that the degradation is due, not to the victim's own errors, but to the long, inexorable, unremitting course of evil influences to which he is exposed. If we had crossed the seas in that companionship, if we were so passed from hulk to prison, if we were one of a marked race, shorn and invested in a prison livery, watched, insulted, punished for a word, our sins cast up against us, our word disbelieved, our entreaties and tears disregarded; if nothing we might do could detach us from a disgraceful classification and apparent equality with monsters of every degree of baseness; if everything was done to destroy our self-respect, what should we be? How could we keep even our present precarious worth and virtue? And the question will arise, What right have men thus to steep, not only the body, not only the external existence of their fellow-creatures, but the very heart and soul into this slough of degradation? Speaking from the English point of view, we are obliged to confess that, in a degree, the evil is inevitable; that the fault, in a great measure, lies with sin itself, the most prolific of all powers, which cannot be confined by any effort of mercy or benevolence to the isolated deed, but must grow and ramify into wide-spread consequences. Human nature is not calculated for the ordeal of a strictly penal existence: it will develop into all sorts of excrescences and deformities when exposed to it, either in prison or transportation; but we do not see how it can be otherwise than that crime should expose men to it unless we return to the Draconian code. But while we say this, we acknowledge the value of a real true picture, such as the 'Broad Arrow,' we believe, gives us, of the life our laws have originated in another hemisphere; for it is too true what is here pathetically enforced—

'How few amongst the multitudes attending a court of justice give more than a passing thought to their doomed fellow-creatures, removed one by one from the bar! There is a breathless silence while the sentence is being pronounced, and a murmur of applause or dissatisfaction, as the case demands, when it has proceeded from the judge's lips; but how few analyse into a definite meaning the legal form of sentence which has fallen on the ear of the poor wretch concerned; annihilating his

life-long hopes, crushing his temporal, and too often his immortal prospects. . . . Here ceases all surmise on the future career of the miserable being who a moment before stood, trembling and haggard, at the dock; and who, in disappearing from the court, has likewise disappeared from the stage of recognised existence; his name has been blotted out from the book of moral life, and henceforth the memory of him perishes. But his disappearance affects no one in the assembly. It is followed by no inquiry; he is not missed; few know or care to know that he lives on somewhere—that his life is ebbing on in a routine of degradation, embodied, but not perceptible, in the sentence passed upon him.’—‘*Broad Arrow*,’ vol. i. p. 403.

But though human nature is changed, and lowered in the condition here delineated, the authoress has very well shown that it loses neither interest nor variety. Wherever an intelligent mind first learns to observe, fit matter, however exceptional, will be found for its study. We conclude Tasmania to have been this field with her, from her thorough acquaintance with colonial life; of which the main curse and trial, to the respectable inhabitants at least, is the mass of crime with which the country is deluged. She dwells, with all the force of experience, on the impossibility of escape from moral pollution, on the hardening effect on the sympathies, and on the atmosphere of slavery and slave ownership it engenders, till it is pretty clear that, in some cases, the colonist becomes too well reconciled to his position of absolute command and virtually irresponsible power of punishment.

In the choice of a fit subject through whom to illustrate the workings of the convict system, the authoress is led to lay her first scenes in England, where her heroine, after a course of error and misfortune, is condemned for a crime she never committed, the imputation of which she bears for her lover’s sake, and thus becomes, in colonial language, Maida Gwynnham, a Lifer, i. e., transported for life. We partly regret this necessity, as the romantic improbability of the incidents implies a want of familiarity with English life and feeling that scarcely prepares the reader for the truth and life of representation which distinguish the main body of the work. The character of Captain Norwell, especially, in his curious villanies, reminds us that there is another view of the antipodes question, and that England to our *vis-à-vis* may be the country of the anthropophagi. But the aim of the authoress is to give vivid scenes, by which we may understand life in Tasmania; and for this purpose her plot is sufficient, and Maida’s superior education and proud, determined character well chosen. We are introduced to the household of an honest, conscientious colonist, and hear his practical experience. We see the hardening effects of living amongst bondmen in his

Tasmania-born wife, who never conceives it possible for a convict to have feeling, and with much humour are taught its natural consequences in Master Charles, their six-year-old son. We are made to feel with the trials of a high-minded, religious, convict chaplain, till we can well imagine the peculiar, tried expression of countenance by which the class are distinguished. We are taken into the kitchen, and become quite experienced in the turn of thought, the language, the temptations, the pleasures, and the trials of convict domestic service. It is evident that men carry off the miseries and humiliations of the condition best: they retain most of their old likeness. Neither their feelings nor ours are outraged to the same degree. For instance, the willing and genial Sanders, who is doubtless a portrait, must be a good deal the same man he was in England. The scene of his first engagement by a master after his time of probation in 'Tench' (the male convicts' first limbo, from which they are naturally eager to escape), is so good and suggestive that we extract it. Mr. Evelyn's first question is—

"Your name?" "Robert Sanders, or anything your honour pleases."
 "Your trade?" "Hostler—but I ain't partial; I can give a h'ist to aught that's wanted." "Do you think you can cook?" His eyes glistened; he was fond of cookery if not of cooking. Catching hold of his cropped hair, he says—"Well, I b'lives I'll handle the wittels as well as most on 'em as don't know nothin' about it. Any ways I'm willin' for it." "Your crime is burglary?" "'Es sure, that's what they calls it; can't say I didn't lift the swag when Sam Tomkins got in and pulled open the door; darned good her did me though!" "What is your religion?" "I ain't partial: don't know as I've choice that way; whatever your honour's a mind to 'll suit me. If your honour hires me out, you won't find me stick to trifles in nothin'." —Vol. i. p. 309.

Nor is his willingness affected, only it often extends beyond his powers and perceptions. Bridget, the young English lady whose place in the piece is to see and feel abuses with the warm indignation of an intelligent ingenuous stranger, and who is established as her uncle's housekeeper, finds him presently wiping the dinner china with his own pocket-handkerchief; when, misunderstanding her disgust, he thus makes light of the obligation—

"Never fear, Miss, it's too bastely for aught else. I've quite used 'em up. What if I hadn't? I ain't one to set store on my things, beyond fetchin' em out when they's wanted. I'm willing to do my best for the master."

Sanders represents the successful convict, who gets his ticket-of-leave, and, under the advice of a good master, marries, sets up a cab, and finally hires a servant of his own. He has never had any sensibilities to wound; and now a fund of self-conceit which out-

lives all loss of self-respect partly does instead. It is on the women that the failure of this self-respect and the utter loss of caste tell the most; in them the degradation is greatest, the change most fundamental. The abject, frightened servility of their address under the stimulus of fear—and they are always afraid—their abandoned insolence when excited, are as terrible as they are ludicrous. Where innocence is never pleaded, for that as convicts they knew would be pleaded in vain, they are reckless in self-accusation on the slightest occasion—

““Oh, Miss, I pray on you not to tell the master. I didn't mean for to offend, it wasn't insolence, indeed no, it wasn't. Poor girls like me gets into trouble before they knows where they are. I knows I fibs dreadful; but believe me, Miss, I never finds out I've fibbed until they tells me so, and punishes me for it.””

Drink gives the only courage to a temper like this—is the only restorer of the lost equality, and every effort of ingenuity is exhausted to procure it, to the infinite disturbance of Tasmanian households. Thus Pridham reports of cook when the breakfast does not come—

““Please, sir, it's no doing of mine. I've tried to rouse her. She'm regular beastly down. I can't go nigh of her. She vows she'll see you blasted 'fore she gets the breakfast, and she says she'll crack me if I go for to get it;” and when the master proceeds himself, in wrath and vengeance, to the scene of action, as masters have to do in Tasmania, the cook perceiving her master, squared towards him. “Come, on my hearty; them that wants their breakfast must fight for it as the dogs does.””

The triumph is short. The next moment the constable makes his appearance and drags the culprit off to three months' hard labour and hard fare. It is amongst characters of this order that the infant colonist acquires his first view of life. Nothing but a mother's absolute self-sacrifice to her maternal duties, renouncing all society and relaxation, can save her children from contamination. Master Charlie's mother did not make the sacrifice.

‘It was nothing new for Charlie to have three new nurses in three successive days. It was no new thing for him to fall asleep under one woman's eye, and awake under another's guardianship. He was accustomed to the prison petticoats and calico caps. There was no shudder when the constable marched off his nurse; he would skip to the window to see the “fun,” as from earliest days he had learnt to designate the bearing away of some unfortunate convict. There was no shudder when a new Anson expiree entered his nursery, clad in the brown badge of crime: he would run to her, and, clasping his chubby arms round her legs, ask, “What are you for?” and then if the crime did not equal his expectations, he would seem vexed, and say, “That is not very bad! why didn't you steal a lot?” The expiree would laugh, and, winking to her sister convict, pronounce the chap a regular shiner.’

These lighter details are varied by tragic scenes; and perhaps

the most effective part of the book lies in the description of life at Port Arthur, the place of second punishment for the incorrigible. If the language is sometimes strained, we feel it natural in the effort to convey the impressions of so heavy and exceptional an existence—a purgatory without hope. The compulsory silence, the inexorable task-masters, the ‘ceaseless stream of yellow life clanging heavily to and fro,’ would be too painful a picture but for the traits of human tenderness which now and then relieve it. We all have heard of the mode in which religious instruction and consolation have to be administered to these unfortunates; the chaplain preaching of gospel peace under the protection of a guard of soldiers with loaded muskets. We here have its effect on an eye-witness graphically given—

‘When her uncle commenced the service, “I will arise and go to my Father,” there was so sudden a rush of chains that she had no choice to refrain from looking. She hastily turned, and beheld some hundreds of her fellow-creatures arranged in the vast amphitheatre before her. There stood the hardened ruffian; there stood the heartbroken penitent; there stood the gray-haired criminal side by side with the mere youth; there stood every degree of guilt mingled in one dingy mass of yellow. Her heart sickened at the sight, yet she could not withdraw her eyes from the closely-cropped sea of heads, when, with one simultaneous movement, down they all dived to the Confession.’

The whole story is suggestive, and throws light upon many a disputed point of education and morals. The power of indirect influences—the trifles which send the iron deeper into the soul, or which restore the wanderer to hope and self-respect—the subtle force of association—the link between seeming indifferent habit and a good or bad train of thought which have been carefully noted in this distant and strange field of inquiry, all help us to read more clearly and to see further into the mysteries of our complete being, and are a contribution to the general fund of knowledge and experience.

In a general review of this sort, chance must, in some degree, direct our selection of particular works, as illustrating any prevailing tone. We have said that, in the art of fluent writing, this age surpasses its predecessors. We are not often repelled at the outset by mere ignorance or clumsiness of diction. There is a certain average of power attained by many, and an average of merit in a dozen different quarters. We are glad to note that the balance of talent and success is in favour of those who have a moral purpose and a distinct standard of right and wrong. Nothing is gained by unscrupulousness. People, as far as we see, write more readable books by adhering to propriety than by discarding it, though now and then some warped and morbid intellect does its best to prove the contrary. A writer who

signalized himself last year by a clever low-toned novel, is now bringing out, in a popular periodical, another tale marked by the same slippery principles, and with a general likeness to its predecessor. The caustic, cynical, unbelieving style is not, in fact, capable of much play or variety: persons who regard men as mere units of a demoralized society, must make them all on the same type. If they will estimate them by the world's, or a mere fraction of the world's standard, there is really no room for originality of treatment. Brute force, brute courage, and brute instincts, however set off by beauty of person, the prestige of fashion, or a fastidious taste, are but low ideals, and admit of little actual change of representation. One muscular ruffian is like another—one matchless face or ankle is much the same as another. In description, at any rate, the reader finds that bewitching toilets, ravishing boots, and gloves fitting to a turn, cease to excite his enthusiasm after the second or third reading; and he begins to see that such details in a writer of so much masculine force are only not puerile because they are something worse. But, in fact, no man can maintain an interest in a world without souls, in a society which discards all high or useful aims and all notions of duty; and delivers itself with sated powers to the pleasures and dissipations of the hour. The author flags for want of a subject worthy of intellectual effort. The reader, in spite of the charm of a full and vigorous style, and an assumed familiarity with fashionable life, finds himself in low company, and wearies amid this set of voluntary outcasts from any rule or law but their own capricious will. We cannot throw ourselves into their loves and jealousies, feats and quarrels, even while we own the history of them to be well given. The insipidity of such interests is felt when a picture of real nature is brought into competition with them, like fresh morning upon a revel. Such a contrast we have welcomed in the impressive tale to which our longest notice has been devoted.

POPULAR PREACHING.

1. *Twelve Sermons: from the Quaresuviale of P. Paolo Segneri.* Translated from the original Italian by James Ford, A.M., Prebendary of Exeter. London: Masters. 1859.
2. *Sermons by the Rev. J. C. M. Bellew, S.C.L.* Three volumes. London: J. & W. Boone. 1858-59.
3. *The Penny Pulpit.* London: J. Paul. 1858-59.

THERE have been of late various manifestations of a feeling of weariness and impatience of the prolonged services of the Church, and especially of the cold and leaden weight of the sermons of which custom exacts so many from the ministers of every congregation. It is easier to lament than to remedy the unfortunate habit which has grown up among the laity of treating almost every religious service as incomplete, unless a discourse composed for the occasion by the clergyman forms the concluding part of it. Those who first discerned and endeavoured to remedy this evil laboured under an unhappy imputation which has gone far to neutralize their efforts. There are thousands of good but narrow-minded people who believe that the daily solemnization of morning or evening prayer in churches has some occult connection with the nightmare of their spiritual existence—Tractarianism. The school of divines to which this name has been applied has often appealed in controversy to the authority, which they supposed conclusive, of the Prayer-book. This argument seems to have produced in many ignorant minds a lurking distrust of the authority, instead of any conviction of the orthodoxy of those who used it. One would really suppose from the pertinacity with which congregations insist that a sermon should follow prayers, that they believe that the use of the ancient liturgy would be dangerous unless a corrective in the shape of half an hour of modern doctrine were taken along with it. Twice or thrice on Sunday, and once probably during the week, an ill-paid incumbent, and a curate who can scarcely be said to be paid at all, are required to deliver from the pulpit in every parish and district church a new and original discourse. It is quite a triumph of memory and vigilance to detect one of these hard-worked and perhaps not very brilliant intellects, endeavouring to pass upon the congregation a sermon which they have heard before. Now it needs no argument or statistics to demonstrate that if the church were many times as wealthy as it is, and could command the services of a far wider range of

intellectual ability than is now available, the demand thus made upon its resources could not be satisfied. Men who are supposed by themselves or by their friends to possess in a high degree the intellectual gifts required in a preacher, are very commonly tempted to try their fortunes at the bar. It will be admitted by everybody that the inns of court contain many hundred men who have ability enough to succeed in their own profession if it were not grievously over-crowded, and to succeed in almost any other calling if any other were open to them. By success we mean the attainment of a competent income by doing the work a man undertakes to do as well as the majority of those who are labouring in the same vocation. To conduct a cause with all necessary ability is quite within the competency of many men who will never find causes to conduct. To address a judicial tribunal, so that people who are not obliged or interested so to do will listen to the advocate, is, however, a very different matter. To do this calls for qualities of which a supply cannot be created merely by creating a demand. But to make a successful preacher it is necessary to arouse and rivet the attention of slothful, or trifling, or worldly minds to matters which they commonly regard as possessing only a distant and uncertain interest. If, therefore, all the most promising aspirants to forensic eminence were enlisted in the service of the church, the complaint that sermons are stale and dull would still arise from many congregations.

But it is not impossible to suggest partial remedies for the existing evil, although it may be very difficult to get anything done towards their adoption. In the first place, if the popular bugbear were once well laid, a great practical improvement might be effected by diminishing the number of sermons. Let those to whom nature has given the power to command attention preach to as many as can hear them in large churches, and let those to whom this gift has been denied content themselves with repeating, as often as two or three can be gathered together, with just emphasis and reverent demeanour, the impressive language of the Prayer-book. It is a truth obvious to all that those who cannot be taught to preach can be taught to read. Both kinds of instruction are equally neglected in preparing candidates for ordination, as if the Church's faith in Divine aid could only be proved by the rejection of every human means. When one sees a curate of comely but not intellectual countenance, and possessed of a strong and perhaps agreeable voice, it is natural to suspect that his academic triumphs have been won rather on the river and the cricket-ground than in the schools. But if such a man desires, as many honestly do, to devote him-

self to the service of the Church, it is hard that he cannot be employed there without compelling him to compose and us to listen to original sermons. If a service must not be considered as complete unless exposition of Scripture and exhortation to religious life form part of it, surely there would be no difficulty in supplying compositions by men capable of thinking clearly and writing forcibly, which should enforce such doctrines and precepts as arose out of the service of the day. When we say there would be no difficulty, we mean none that did not arise out of the habits and prejudices of the congregation. But if people will insist that two or three sermons should be composed every week for their special hearing on a single occasion, the complaints of emptiness and feebleness must continue, and it can only be said, in favour of going to church to listen to such discourses, that the time would probably be spent in even greater listlessness at home.

To go to church on Sunday is felt to be a duty, but also, too commonly, a burden. To offer to the public an opportunity of satisfying conscience on easier terms is the business of the popular preacher. Considering that success in this line requires only moderate abilities, it is perhaps surprising that so few clergymen are tempted to enter on it. The popular preacher aims at satisfying somewhat the same standard of qualification as was possessed by him who was said by his contemporaries to be a wit among lords and a lord among wits. A very slight infusion of stage trickery, employed with judgment, will produce an immense effect in the pulpit, because it is usually occupied by men who condemn even the least attention to oratorical effect as derogatory to their sacred office. Thus a man who would have made little or no impression as an actor, succeeds as a popular preacher by doing that indifferently which an actor is required to do well. In the same way, if morality and orthodoxy are combined with ever so little liveliness of style or novelty of illustration, they will be far more welcome to ordinary hearers than if presented simple and unadulterated, as preachers commonly deem it their duty to administer them to their congregations. As an actor, a poet, a novelist, a journalist, or an advocate, the competition of highly-gifted and energetic rivals might have proved far too much for one who, by borrowing a little from some or all of these different examples, and employing what he has thus gained in the composition and delivery of sermons, may attain to a kind and degree of success denied to those who make regius professors and bishops their models of a pastoral style of eloquence.

The most signal example which London now presents of the

sort of success we have been describing, is to be found in the sermons of the Rev. J. C. M. Bellew, of which three volumes have been published at intervals during the last three years. This gentleman first attained notoriety by his preaching at St. Philip's Church, Regent Street, and we believe that he preserves and extends his popularity as minister of St. Mark's Church, Hamilton Terrace, St. John's Wood. Both these churches, like many others in the metropolis, may be considered as a sort of commercial property, the value of which fluctuates according to the attractions of the services. Mr. Bellew, we may say without fear of contradiction, would be thrown away as rector of an ancient parish with a tithe-commutation rent-charge of 500*l.* a year, and all the pews in the church appropriated to respectable parishioners. He is so far an actor that the uncertain audiences and favour and varying gains that attend the actor's labours are equally necessary to stimulate his own industry. Some notion of his style of preaching will readily be formed by any one who has observed the advertisements in the 'Times,' announcing that the Rev. J. C. M. Bellew will lecture on the Holy Land at Exeter Hall, or will give a reading from the British Poets at St. James's Hall. It would be easy to name many clergymen who do not do such things as this, and probably could not if they tried, and who certainly cannot preach as Mr. Bellew preaches, and very likely do not envy his accomplishments or popularity. We do not question the sincerity of this gentleman, and we do not wish ever to see cause to do so, because if he is not sincere he is something which we will not lightly mention. All we say is, that such sincerity is different from that which one is accustomed to find in clergymen; and where there is avowedly a good deal of acting, it is difficult to tell precisely at what points reality begins and ends. But whatever be the quality of Mr. Bellew's zeal, it is certain that his success is genuine. His congregation, we should suppose, consists principally of inhabitants of the neighbourhood where he preaches. There will, doubtless, be present every Sunday some enthusiasts, who come regularly, and from long distances, and some seekers after novelty who come once or twice to listen to him. The bulk of his congregation consists, however, for the most part, of persons who carry on business or practise professions in the metropolis, and reside in or near St. John's Wood, and of their wives and families. People who lead this sort of life—getting home tired at six or seven o'clock to dinner, and feeling inclined to doze after it—do not often trouble themselves to start on a fresh journey into town in search of dramatic and musical entertainments, at which they would probably go

to sleep much less comfortably than in their own dining-rooms. Once now and then there is a lecture or a concert at some assembly-room in their own neighbourhood, and they assist at such solemnities under the same sense of public duty which brings what are called 'county families' over many miles of difficult cross-roads to sanction by their presence some annual ball at the county town. But if it be a lecture, or a reading from a poet, that solicits the patronage of St. John's Wood, it will probably appear, on a second glance at the advertisement, that the principal performer is to be the Rev. J. C. M. Bellew. Thus the congregation of which that gentleman is now minister, appears, for the most part, to pass its week-days in business which is divided from the night by some hours of satiety and sleepiness. If they vary the routine of life at all, it will probably be to give or to attend some pompous and tedious dinner-party, or to patronize some sort of entertainment in which Mr. Bellew very likely bears a part. But the mental recreation which it is inconvenient to seek at other times is to some extent supplied on Sundays. Under Mr. Bellew's management there is some tolerable music, some rhetorical declamation, which is at least good enough to please those who rarely witness anything better, and a good deal of flowery language, and occasional scraps of poetry; and all this over and above the solid satisfaction of appearing well-dressed at church, and of performing the religious duties of the week in a conspicuous and handsomely-furnished pew. Between families who abstain from theatres because they are wicked, and those who cannot go because papa likes to dine at seven o'clock, any wealthy suburb of London must contain many church-goers to whom Mr. Bellew's ministry would supply just as much gentle intellectual excitement as is necessary to preserve life from absolute stagnation, and to save heavy respectability from sinking, by its own weight, into the abyss of dulness. To form a congregation for him, we must look among people who are well-to-do, and not over clever or learned or active-minded. Such sermons as he preaches would be utterly incomprehensible to the poor, while those whose daily life makes them familiar with poets, orators, and actors, would prefer to give their thoughts on Sundays to pure religion, rather than to ingenious artifices.

In examining the volumes now before us, we observe a progress in the author's mind which is perhaps more likely to mitigate our own censures than to win wider popularity at St. John's Wood. Mr. Bellew's materials for composing and delivering the sermons in the first volume appear to have been a copious reading and recollection of the lesser English poets, just

such a loose acquaintance with the science of his profession as he could not avoid picking up in his reading for ordination and some years' ministry, and a practical familiarity with the current precepts of stage-directors as to tone and attitude. But after publishing his first volume, he made a tour of the Holy Land, and in order to obtain full value for his time and money, he got up Jewish Antiquities, and Biblical History and Criticism, before and during his expedition, just as every one now-a-days reads Murray's 'Handbook' in the railway-carriage on his journey to that part of the Continent which he has chosen for his vacation ramble. It would be impossible for a clergyman to read, even in this cursory way, some of the learned and thoughtful works which have been written in illustration of the Bible, without showing, in his subsequent sermons, that his mind had been influenced by what he read. There can be no doubt at all, that if you want to raise a preacher of the Bellew species, the proper course is to take a youth who has a good voice and person, and a large share of confidence in himself, and to provide that at one of the universities he shall lead the life either of a 'fast' man or of a dandy, or in some other way shall be preserved as much as possible from giving his mind to serious study. A simple-minded Cambridge tutor is said to have advised his pupils, if they wished to excel in the graces of classical composition, on no account to be tempted to read the New Testament in the original language. It is known that the evangelists played sad tricks with the particles and the optative mood; and, said this experienced guide to the high places of the Tripos, 'The style of St. Mark might happen to creep into your Greek prose.' Three years of very moderate application to logic, mathematics, philology, divinity, and history, have doubtless spoiled many a man whom nature had qualified to become the delight of St. John's Wood. It was said by an irritated victim in the early days of the 'Edinburgh Review,' that its authors were young gentlemen who had begun to write before they had begun to think. Now this is just what an aspirant after such fame as Mr. Bellew's ought to do. If he thinks before he writes, he will never write at all in a style that will conquer popularity. But it is far easier to hold a social reputation of any kind than to win it—a truth which is conspicuously proved by the example of our respectable contemporary of the blue-and-yellow cover. When once a character is established, many liberties may be safely taken which would have been fatal to its immature growth. We all know that leading counsel at the bar may, and often do, with impunity, neglect to read their briefs. Mr. Bellew's travels in the Holy Land, and his historical and critical study of the Bible,

if undertaken earlier, would probably have rendered the composition of his first volume of sermons as impossible to him as it must always have been to such a man as Dr. Stanley. But Mr. Bellew should be moderate in the use of this new faculty of thinking. If his mind progresses at the same rate, and in the same direction, as it has done during the last two years, we fear that the pew-rents at St. Mark's Church will begin to be in danger of diminution. It will be lamentable if Mr. Bellew should ever fall into an error like that of Hogarth, who believed that historical painting was the line of art in which he was specially qualified to excel. The history of Christianity is not likely to be elucidated, nor is the evidence of its truth likely to be strengthened, by any fruit of Mr. Bellew's studies. But without going very deep into biblical criticism and theology, it is quite possible to know and think about such subjects more than would be acceptable at St. John's Wood. To use words which are probably familiar to Mr. Bellew's tongue, it would be 'a most lame and impotent conclusion,' if, from such a dazzling height of eminence, he should decline into preaching sober humdrum sermons, such as may be heard every Sunday in a hundred pulpits. Let not the brilliant, varied hues of a summer day fade thus into a dull gray evening. Immunity from our criticisms will be but a slender compensation for the loss of the admiration of all the ladies and almost all the gentlemen of a polite and genteel suburb of this great metropolis. There is a little manual in existence called the 'Oxford Pluck Papers,' which contains a maxim that deserves Mr. Bellew's attention. The book assumes that many men come to the university to be plucked, and offers to assist them to attain their object. One rule which it lays down is, 'Do not read the Bible; or, if you do, read at least forty chapters daily.' Now this, for the purpose in view, is very sensible advice; and as we hold that a pluck is no disqualification for popular preaching, the precept may have a wider application than was foreseen by its ingenious author.

But in another point of view, Mr. Bellew's travels in the Holy Land have proved a very great advantage to him. Most of us have experienced, and some perhaps have in turn inflicted on their friends the conversation of a tourist in the first week of his return to November fogs and business. Every topic that can be started brings us round, in the most surprising manner, to the Rhine, or to France or Italy. The family dinner is contrasted with the bills of fare of twenty celebrated hotels, till the cook is in despair, and the mistress also, unless she be a transcendental lady who is so busy about advocating woman's rights, as not to care whether the meal at which she presides is good or

bad. After dinner, the young ladies are scared from the piano by allusions to foreign performers of surpassing merit, and the handing round of coffee is the signal for a fresh exercitation upon the ever-recurring theme that they manage these things better abroad. But the pressure of daily cares and duties soon drives these recollections into an out-of-the-way corner of the memory. It is only when the tourist finds a sort of business and profit in so doing that he preserves them for a year or more as a prominent feature of his mind. Mr. Bellew turned his travels into money, just like Mr. Albert Smith. Some of the sermons which he preached immediately after his return are really nothing more than exercises in descriptive writing. He has read the minor poets for language, and travelled in Palestine for ideas, and now he will paint for us a few word-pictures. He is an artist labouring in his vocation just as much as Mr. Holman Hunt was an artist in working at his picture of the Scape-goat. We believe that soon after his return from the Holy Land, Mr. Bellew did deliver lectures at Exeter Hall, of which the subjects, times, and prices of seats were advertised in the usual way. Some of the sermons composed about the same time, after subtracting the text and the benediction, would have done quite well for lectures on the history and topography of Palestine. That which was declaimed in the church on Sunday, might, with a few slight changes, have been declaimed in the public hall on Monday. It is true that people expect, and will listen to much more of lectures than they will of sermons; but the difference hereby occasioned would be one of quantity only, and not of character.

In selecting examples of Mr. Bellew's style, we pass over his first volume, because, as we have said, the publication of his sermons has extended over three years, and he has thus had time to mitigate the most conspicuous extravagances which mark his earlier productions. We will take, as a fair example, a sermon on 'Self-dedication,' preached at the beginning of last year. He begins by stating that 'Self-dedication became the spirit of religion at the inauguration of Christianity in the life of Christ on earth.' Our Saviour's life was an example for all succeeding generations. 'He who runs by the wayside as Christ walked through Galilee may, in his conduct, get at the roots and derivations of all his words.' The exercise of running, one would think, could not be very favourable for the study of etymology. But this illustration, whatever we may think of it, is evidently much approved by Mr. Bellew himself. He adds, in italics, 'The grammar of his language is his life!' And he goes on to say, 'In that life the figure of our Saviour now stands

the model of humanity upon the pedestal of time!" The notes of admiration, which do not seem to be otherwise called for, are probably intended to express Mr. Bellew's wonder at his own cleverness. The lifeless statue of formal religious observation stood on this pedestal before. This was that great image of which the prophet Daniel speaks, made of iron, and clay, and brass, and gold, and silver—an exposition of prophecy which deserves the attention of the curious. But let us proceed to trace, if we can, the argument of this discourse. We use the word 'argument' in the sense which it bears when placed before the successive books of an epic poem. Perhaps, if we had said 'plot' we should convey our meaning better. Mr. Bellew evidently adopts that saying in the Rehearsal that 'the plot is good for nothing except to bring in fine things.' If the plot will not readily adapt itself to the purposes of flowery declamation, so much the worse for the plot. The model which stands upon the pedestal of time appears to be the life, that is, as we understand, the whole life, of Christ. So much is tolerably clear. But as the sermon before us was composed for the first Sunday in the year, it occurs to Mr. Bellew, that 'at this season the Virgin Mary presented the child Jesus in the temple.' This may be true, but does not seem altogether relevant. The pedestal of the ages perhaps stands in a metaphorical temple of the soul of man, and the model which man ought to imitate stands upon the pedestal. This, if anything, must be the connection which the presentation of the child Jesus has with the matter in hand. The plot, we may fear, is already becoming obstinate; but it is a comfort that we are getting to the fine things. 'St. Luke has described to us the delight of Simeon and Anna on the presentation of our Saviour in the temple.' We can, 'without much effort,' imagine the proceedings of Anna. The only effort necessary would be to observe the conduct of the grandmamas of St. John's Wood. Many an old lady will own with delight that here is a pleasing picture of herself:—

'We can suppose how she must have hung over the form of the infant Jesus, how she must have learnt by heart the features of the baby child, how she must have looked into his young eyes to catch a glimpse of that intelligence which was hereafter to instruct the universe; and then we can imagine how her mind, filled with the loveliness of the heaven-born babe, would naturally overflow in speech, and how she would "speak of him," and describe him, and amplify and enlarge on every characteristic of this infant Saviour!'

We almost expect, before Mr. Bellew has done, to be able to imagine how she bought the child a beautiful perambulator. If

there be any merit in describing exactly how an old woman maunders over a child, and if the pulpit be the proper place for doing so, Mr. Bellew, it must be owned, is a highly successful preacher. He can 'amplify and enlarge' upon this subject until St. Luke's words are improved in a way that would very much surprise the author of them and disgust the reverent reader of Holy Scripture. But having brought in this picture of the old lady there is no further occasion for the child, and the model is again a man. 'The student in the academy places his model before him in such a position as may exhibit to his eye most advantageously the muscular development and symmetry of the figure. Christ is our model.' The example of humanity is again on the pedestal of time, and is exhibiting for our observation 'the symmetrical outline of his self-dedication.' We feared that Mr. Bellew would proceed to 'amplify and enlarge' upon this comparison of Christ to a model at the academy; but happily his hearers are left to complete for themselves, if they choose to do so, this monstrous violation of decency and religious feeling.

It may be as well, having reached this point, to abandon further anxiety about the argument, and to content ourselves with endeavouring to appreciate the marvels of thought and diction which await our onward progress. Here we have a bit of popular law. Mr. Bellew is insisting on the uncertainty of life. 'We are merely tenants-at-will, and not the freehold occupants of a universe.' When men speak of a 'lease of life,' Mr. Bellew thinks they utter a falsehood. Now we do not find fault with Mr. Bellew because he does not know that the English law ascribes the quality of freehold to a lease for life, nor because he has failed to see that such a lease is merely a lease for as long as life lasts. When men use the term 'a lease of life' they do not necessarily imply anything as to certainty of tenure; nor is certainty an essential part of the legal definition of a freehold. Our only complaint is, that Mr. Bellew throws himself recklessly into the midst of things which he cannot possibly understand. If he were capable of clearly apprehending the elements of any system of law, he would have found it quite impossible to compose the sermon on which we are now commenting. No amount of study could make Mr. Bellew a lawyer, but a very little might suffice to ruin his popularity at St. John's Wood. It is seldom, however, that he reads to so little purpose. In the very next page we find that he has been among the poets, and returns to teach us that life is not only uncertain but disappointing. Age is adjured to answer, for the warning of youth, 'Where are thy lovers, and thy friends, and thy Christmas

festivities, and thy brave desires to woo a wifely home and win a world's prosperity?' Mr. Bellew, when he wrote this passage, was fresh from the garden of poetry, but one of the flowers he has garlanded was grown in his own parterre. Who ever heard before of 'wooing a wifely home?' and does Mr. Bellew suppose that the line 'woo'd and won and wedded and a' ' contains three participles of precisely equal import? Does he mean to say that wooing a lady is synonymous with winning her, or, in other words, that to ask and to have are the same thing? And what is 'a wifely home?' A small but genteel residence, we suppose, suitable to the means of a newly-married couple, and within a moderate distance of the church where Mr. Bellew preaches. It may be observed, by the way, that venerable age is here called upon, in a page of impassioned interrogation, to explain to youth, and especially to its own sons, that all worldly things are vanity. But if the old gentleman who is being scared and flurried by all these questions is the father of grown-up children, it seems to follow that 'his brave desires to woo a wifely home' have been attended with very substantial success, and therefore any argument drawn from his example may possibly fail to deter the next generation from following in the same path. But here, perhaps, is a passage which may forcibly suggest to sanguine youth that disappointment awaits its efforts. 'Where, second childhood and oblivious age, among the expiring embers of memory is the spark of that brilliant wisdom that once flashed like forked lightning from that now palsied tongue?' If, indeed, this is a true picture of 'the governor' as a young man—if brilliant wisdom, flashing like forked lightning from the tongue, is necessary either to earn a livelihood or to persuade a young lady of St. John's Wood to share it with one, then surely our hopes of a genteel villa and a pretty wife must be owned to be utter vanity. But it may be hoped that business may be done, and to good profit, on the Stock Exchange, and even in the Court of Chancery, without any brilliant wisdom or forked lightning of the tongue; and that, at a proper time and place, an affirmative answer may be obtained to a very interesting question even if it should be proposed in a blundering, confused way. For our own part we shall not readily believe that respectable citizens of fifty years ago talked forked lightning over the affairs of life, and our incredulity upon this point is heightened by the consideration that they had no Mr. Bellew to show them how to do so.

A very slight examination of these volumes must suffice to convince any one that their author can at pleasure command the services of all the arts and sciences to illustrate and enforce

his argument. The sculptor and the conveyancer have already seen that Mr. Bellew is capable, at any moment, of annexing their peculiar provinces to the chariot-wheels of his fervid oratory. As soon as we have turned a page the mathematician must prepare himself for instant conquest. Earthly life has been proved to be mere vanity and vexation, but still it has its proper use as preparatory to the life hereafter. 'This view of it includes the whole circle of existence and creation, embraces every act here and every hope hereafter, while less than this is only a segment of that circle, only presents to sight a part instead of a whole, only exhibits the world as an isolated sphere,' &c. The narrow and mistaken view of earthly life looks, says Mr. Bellew, not to the whole circle of creation, but only to a part or segment of it, and, so looking, it sees only the sphere of the world—that is, we should say, it sees not merely one but many circles. Geometry teaches that a circle is part of a sphere, and a segment is part of a circle; and it also teaches that the whole is greater than a part. Mr. Bellew, on the contrary, affirms that a part is greater than the whole. Now the congregation which listened to this sermon either have or have not read Euclid's Elements. The ladies, we may assume, have not, unless their education was very lately finished at one of the most improved of modern ladies' colleges. In the absence of any conception of what is meant by a segment of a circle they will fail to perceive any distinct meaning in the passage, and therefore they will be all the more ready to affirm that it is most beautiful. But if Mr. Bellew undertakes to preach to those who have any smattering of mathematics, we recommend to his perusal a recent Bampton Lecture, in which he will find an example of how geometry should be used to illustrate a theological argument. We would not, however, be supposed to invite a popular preacher to any extensive study of Bampton Lectures. An indiscreet use of such mental food as that might be almost fatal to the life of Mr. Bellew's eloquence. As yet that glorious faculty is unimpaired, and as it bursts forth in one of its highest efforts, we are warned that the sermon is near its end. We return, after many devious wanderings, to the contemplation of Christ's example. 'In it they catch glimpses of the perfect will of God, and hear distinct and audible in their souls the swelling music of the great hereafter.' Perhaps readers may here inquire who are 'they' who enjoy this privilege? Well, that is a question which occurred to our own minds, and, to answer it, we tried back a little, and found that 'they' are 'our souls;' that is, the souls of Mr. Bellew and his admiring hearers. But how can these or any other

souls, even with all the advantage of listening every Sunday to such a preacher, hear 'in their souls,' either the music of eternity or any other divine sound? How can there be a soul within a soul and a body to enclose both? No doubt, an epic poet might talk of 'the magnanimous soul of Ajax,' when he meant Ajax himself visibly pounding the Trojans with weapons, not only ponderable but ponderous. In the same way, 'they' must mean the genteel occupants of pews, and it is their souls that Mr. Bellew's eloquence awakens to hear the music of eternity. 'In it'—that is, in Christ's example—'they listen to the finished anthem of eternity; the one, only, full, harmonious strain proceeding from the mouth of God which has caught the hearing of the world. In Christ's example we have the complete revelation of the will of God as to the activities of man. It is to us the audible and beautiful soliloquy of heaven, the deep diapason of the soul sounding from all eternity to all time.' Oh! Mr. Bellew, no more, no more! Let us pause an instant and try whether we can extract from all thy echoing phrases some grain of sense. Condescend to tell us what is meant by 'the finished anthem of eternity.' In another ten minutes we shall be called upon by your admirers to praise the sermon, and we might call it a finished composition without either violating truth or risking our reputation for good taste. The late Mr. Palmer was a finished rogue before as well as after he was hanged. On the whole, it appears probable that Mr. Bellew is speaking in the sense in which musical critics in the newspapers say that the performances of M. Costa's band are finished. The singing of Madame Bosio was, in the same way, finished; and it is now, alas! finished in another and most melancholy manner. We assume, then, that 'the anthem of eternity' will be performed for a long time to come. But here is another difficulty. Who are the performers of this 'finished anthem?' Mr. Bellew's hearers will probably think of a composition which includes one or more solos, and duets, or trios, and a chorus. But this anthem is the 'audible and beautiful soliloquy of heaven,' and it is also 'the deep diapason of the soul sounding from all eternity to all time.' We ask again, with such reverence as Mr. Bellew leaves possible, who are the performers? A soliloquy, if it is to be listened to, must be audible, and it may be beautiful, but it admits only of a single voice. This single voice, then, comes from heaven, and 'the deep diapason of the soul' on earth accompanies it. Diapason is a word of which the convenience was long ago discerned by poets, and it has been so used or abused by them, that it has almost ceased to have any special meaning, and may stand for any musical

sound whatever. Some sort of accompaniment, therefore, vocal or instrumental, we may suppose ourselves to hear from earth mingling with the soliloquy of heaven, and this accompaniment is, moreover, sounding 'from all eternity to all time.' Here, again, we need an ingenious expositor. Our own conjecture is, that 'all eternity' and 'all time' are two bodies of choristers who sit facing one another, and sing alternate verses, as the psalms are chanted in cathedrals. Perhaps some scholar who can arrange to his own satisfaction the choruses of *Æschylus* may succeed better than ourselves in distributing the parts of this 'audible and beautiful' concert between the powers of heaven and the souls of men, and may be able to instruct both eternity and time in what exactly they have to do. After our own best efforts and utmost capacity have been expended upon the investigation of Mr. Bellew's meaning, we can only find him saying, in very splendid and sounding language, that, 'in quires and places where they sing, here followeth the anthem.'

Among the lessons which may be drawn from the experience of theatrical managers, Mr. Bellew has not overlooked the importance of letting the curtain fall upon a grand combination of the various talents of all the artists in the establishment. We have all seen how children at a pantomime, after watching the tricks and sudden changes with an intelligence equal to the occasion, fall into fixed gazing and mere bewilderment at the gorgeous splendour and many-coloured lights which illuminate the last tableau. Very clever juveniles are capable of finding out how the decapitation of the clown is managed, and can even give a shrewd guess as to the composition of the mad bull, which, rushing out of a butcher's shop into a crowded thoroughfare, forms a favourite feature in these entertainments. But when they behold the final interposition of the presiding deity, when all the company come upon the stage, and brilliant fire-wheels revolve, and the leading performers strike attitudes, and the orchestra brays forth its loudest sounds, young and old alike become incapable of criticism or vigilance, and subside unresisting into the conviction that art has conquered nature, and appropriated all her powers of majesty and beauty to embellish the sublime spectacle. Now this is just what we experience when we reach the peroration of one of Mr. Bellew's sermons. Hitherto reason struggled to retain her throne, but at the first notes of the anthem of eternity she confesses a superior power. Wonder, and ever higher wonder, is the only surviving function of our minds. Before we have time to think what can be meant by 'the diapason of the soul,' new and bolder figures awe our presumptuous questionings into silent, humble admiration. The example

of Christ is now an electric wire, along which the will of God travels into the heart of man. 'As the baser metal of earth cometh forth from the electrified water, radiant in silvery brightness, so the example communicated to us by our Saviour, pours his strength and fulness into our inward being,' &c. Now, to compare the Divine influence upon the soul of man to an electric shock is one thing, and to compare the soul which has been subjected to this influence to a metal tea-spoon or candlestick covered with a thin coating of silver by electric agency is something wholly different. If Mr. Bellew seizes one idea, he cannot be content with it, but instantly grasps at another and another, and jumbles all into wild confusion, in which his meaning, if he has any, becomes inextricably entangled. It appears, however, on careful reading of the words quoted, and more which follow them, that Mr. Bellew intends to compare the soul of man which has profited by the study of Christ's example—either by gazing at the model, by holding the electric wire, or by other means—to a piece of 'white-metal' which has been electro-plated by a familiar process. As this embellishment has been reserved for the very last paragraph of the sermon, it is evident that the author values himself highly upon his ingenuity and poetic skill. Now on this point we differ from him entirely, and our objection to his comparison is simply this, that it is odious. A lump of base metal is not purified by clothing its outer surface in a shining but perishable coat. If Mr. Bellew had wished to warn his hearers against becoming 'similar men of virtue,' the figure which he has invented might, by way of novelty, have replaced, very suitably, the whited sepulchre of which Scripture speaks. The lump of electro-plated metal might well enough typify a hypocrite, but surely no other preacher could have taken it as a symbol of the pure in heart and life. Besides, we believe that the spoons and candlesticks do not come forth from the electric process 'radiant in silvery brightness,' but of a dull white hue, and that much grinding and polishing are necessary before they become fit to appear upon a genteel dinner-table. Perhaps we may consider that Mr. Bellew's sermons do for the soul that for which wire brushes and blood-stone are applied to electro-plated goods. What does Mr. Bellew think of this improvement upon his electro-chemical process of regeneration? Does a side-board of plate 'equal to silver,' as the advertisements express it, suggest to any but a strangely perverted mind the smallest likeness of 'the heart of man cleansed from its baser passions;' or can any but a hopelessly depraved taste see in the apparatus for electro-plating a fitting emblem of 'the precious treasure of His spirit having touched and transformed our hearts into pure

and brilliant lustre?' Can a bit of silvered zinc and copper be affirmed to have undergone a change at all like 'tempering the metal of our spirits to go forth into the world?' And, finally, cannot Mr. Bellew persuade himself that exhortations to do with all our might whatsoever our hands find to do, would be equally efficacious if delivered in simple language, without either violent metaphors or affectations of word and action which make it almost impossible to believe in the sincerity of him who utters them?

One cannot but admire the dexterity with which the author of these sermons has employed his talent for description, and his observations made in Eastern travel for their embellishment. In discoursing upon the text 'We preach Christ crucified,' &c., he tells us that 'fully to understand the subject under consideration, it is necessary to be acquainted with the condition of Corinth at the time when the apostle addressed this epistle.' It is fortunate that Mr. Bellew is so well able to supply this essential preliminary to the formation of a sound belief. 'Corinth, the key of the Peloponnesus, standing on the isthmus between the Ionian and Ægean seas, overhung by the Acrocorinthus, the precipitous rock upon which stood the citadel; . . . and from which across the Saronic gulf, the Acropolis at Athens is visible, &c.' We have then a glance at Mummius, at Julius Cæsar's colony, and at Gallio, 'a man who was totally unconcerned about any discussions or differences of religious opinion'—a passage which shows us how capable Mr. Bellew is of polishing the rude language of St. Luke. There is next a brief account of the various nations and opinions to be found at Corinth, and then we get back again to its topography. 'Seated between two seas and overlooking both,' Corinth had become what Venice was at a later period. Fitted with such preparatory knowledge, we are now ready to proceed to consider the doctrine of the Crucifixion. We may suggest, in passing, that it would be convenient to candidates for holy orders if Lord Byron's 'Siege of Corinth,' with notes, could be published as an appendix to all future editions of Commentaries upon St. Paul's Epistles. But, indeed, there is not any limit to the skilful application of profane history and literature in illustrating the apostle's teaching. The next sermon in the volume is upon the text, 'He preached unto them Jesus and the resurrection.' Now there is many a graduate of our universities who has got up a few Greek plays for his little-go or degree, and, having passed the examination, has dismissed them from his memory as incapable of yielding any further profit. But such thriftless students might take a lesson from Mr. Bellew, who works every scrap of knowledge

that comes to him into his sermons. 'In the theatre, beneath the Acropolis, the people of Athens had beheld the enactment of their poet's tragedy when Hercules restored Alcestis from the tomb.' Really, Mr. Bellew excels all other clergymen in the art of composing sermons, as far as a French surpasses an English soldier in the mystery of making soup. Not a fragment of Euripides lurking in a corner of the memory, but he can manage to extract some nutriment for the spirit from it. And if the subject of 'Christ crucified' introduced the scenery of Corinth, the subject of 'Christ risen' suggests, with equal propriety, that of Athens. We are invited to consider how far the doctrine of the Resurrection applies not merely to the citizens of Athens, but to the citizens of the world. And how does Mr. Bellew direct the course of our meditations? 'From the port of the Piræus, at the distance of five miles, the Acropolis of Athens, crowned with its ruins, rises When St. Paul reached the port, that rock would meet his eye crowded with chaste and noble edifices.' In what follows we must take the liberty of epitomizing Mr. Bellew's description of Athens and Attica, and turning it, for the sake of brevity, into a mere inventory of natural and artificial features. Towering above other objects, the apostle would see the gigantic figure of Minerva which was cast out of the trophies of Marathon. This is compared to the figure of an angel which now overlooks Rome. The long walls once united Athens with the Piræus, and by crossing the plain amidst their ruins St. Paul would reach the city. Here he is surrounded with evidences of idolatry, but also of taste and splendour, and Mr. Bellew, who follows him, is ready with just remarks upon them all. Let us listen to him with patience, and wait for the Resurrection until we get to it. The apostle proceeds up the street which leads from the Piræan gateway to the foot of the Acropolis. Altars and temples and statues are on every side. How fortunate, under such circumstances, must we all feel in the possession of a guide who is well versed in history and a judicious critic of works of art! The Pnyx, the hill of the Areopagus, and the Agora, are sketched with skilful hand. The Agora was surrounded by cloisters 'probably resembling the Campo Santo at Pisa.' Here the congregation remark that their accomplished preacher has visited Italy as well as Greece and Palestine. Pictures and statues, and 'the evidences of idolatry,' meet the apostle's view. 'The spirit of St. Paul was stirred within him,' and so was the spirit of Mr. Bellew, but in a different way. The apostle would ascend the Acropolis by the Propylæa. There would stand the Temple of Victory, the statues of Mercury, Minerva, and Venus; and also of Pericles

and of Agrippa and Augustus. 'Superior to all, he would stand beneath the colossal figure of Minerva, holding her brazen shield above the head of Athens; and he would look on that superb triumph of art, that epic of poetry done in stone, the Temple of Minerva, the Parthenon!—the glorious effort of the proudest days of Athens; and even to this hour in its ruins the lasting monument which tells the grandeur of that Greece which is no more!' Patience, good people, we shall come to the Resurrection presently.

'Tis Greece, but living Greece no more.'

Our guide seems to be familiar with the poet to whom that line belongs; and most properly, for St. Paul also borrowed from the poets of his time, and, besides, he acknowledged the obligation. 'Such was the external aspect of the city,'—such, that is, as it has been described in the last four pages; and if the congregation, as well as the preacher, are not by this time able 'to imagine for the moment that we are among St. Paul's audience,' it is a pity that any more of such magnificent description should be thrown away upon them. 'The religion of Athens depended upon art and ceremony, and was little more than a mental intoxication.' Some people are perhaps beginning to think that this would not be an unfair account to give of the religion of St. John's Wood. 'A constant desire for display, and excitement, and novelty' may be kept alive, under skilful management, by the services of a Protestant church as well as by the processions and festivals of the heathen gods. The worship of the Athenians receives from Mr. Bellew the hard name of 'religious dissipation;' and if we had as much eloquence, we might possibly venture to characterize the ceremonies over which he presides in equally severe terms.

The description of Athens is suitably succeeded by an account of the various philosophies; and 'such was the city and such were the people to whom Paul preached.' Surely we are at length getting near to the subject of the Resurrection. Nearer, perhaps, but still not very near. 'Probably the usual place of discussion (the Agora) became too confined.' Having formed, under Mr. Bellew's guidance, a clear conception of the Agora, we are able to judge for ourselves whether it would hold all who wished to hear St. Paul, and, as a natural consequence, we can better understand his preaching. No doubt, those who have inspected the plan of Covent Garden Theatre at the box-office are prepared in the best way to criticise a new *prima donna*. If Mr. Bellew had been a liberal candidate at the late election he would properly have commenced his justification of the dissolved

House of Commons by an accurate description of the whole edifice erected by Sir Charles Barry. There is nothing like beginning at the beginning, even if one has to wait a very considerable time before getting near the end. How is it possible for a constituency to judge of a member's conduct unless they have brought vividly before their minds the works of art which adorn the approaches to the House where that member's duty is discharged? Surely the merits of the statue of Hampden must be properly understood before we can consider to any purpose the career of Lord John Russell. Most seasonably, therefore, does Mr. Bellew repeat: 'The hill of the Areopagus lay to the north, and the Agora was in the hollow beyond its slopes, and beneath the Acropolis. On this hill stood a temple dedicated to Mars.' The Court of the Areopagus is dismissed with a slight notice; and now 'St. Paul stood in front of the hill,' ready, it would seem, to preach about the Resurrection. But once again it is necessary to impress upon our memories that 'above him rose the Acropolis, crowned with the Parthenon, and the statue of Minerva looking down upon him,' and at last the apostle is permitted to begin. Now this is what one may call doing proper justice to a great speech; and we trust that the debates of the new parliament will be treated in the exhaustive method which Mr. Bellew practises. Let us suppose that some champion of popular rights has been thundering against aristocratic sympathies. The summary in the morning papers will begin with a brief account of the Reform Club. As the orator quits that building the Duke of York's column and Waterloo Place claim a moment's notice. Proceeding along Pall Mall the eye rests upon the equestrian statue of George III. The University Club suggests a digression to the Isis and the Cam. Presently, on the left, the Royal Academy rises above Trafalgar Square, and the pictures which are now exhibiting there will obtain a hasty criticism. The statue of Lord Nelson at Charing Cross is to an Englishman what the brazen Pallas of the Acropolis was to an Athenian, and therefore it must not be forgotten, that as our popular orator walked towards the House of Commons that statue looked down upon him. Country readers of the reported speech will need to keep this fact steadily in mind or they will fail to catch the spirit of it. Nor must it be forgotten that Sir Charles Napier stood erect and stiff, and Dr. Jenner reclined meditative, and the fountains played feebly and the little boys vigorously in the square. The hoary piles and ancient memories of the Abbey and the Hall will next demand attention; and then a summary of the speech may be introduced into the report with some chance of its being read with profit. Perhaps, if this model were to be adopted, parliamentary reform might become secon-

dary in the newspapers to statues and buildings, and the recollections which they suggest; just as in Mr. Bellew's sermons there is a great deal about where St. Paul went and what he saw, and only a very little about what he said concerning the doctrine of the Resurrection.

We believe that excursion trains on Sundays have been defended on the ground that a ramble in the fields or by the seaside does a man as much spiritual good as going to church. Certainly a walk in the country after hard sedentary toil is very delightful; but perhaps the capacity of an ordinary pedestrian for finding 'sermons in stones and books in everything' may have been overrated. This, at least, is our own opinion; but Mr. Bellew, we find, takes a much more sanguine view of the extent to which sublime doctrines may be taught by simple agencies. In his glowing language the object of a holiday excursion is 'to revel for a while in the unrestrained freshness of nature, whose mountain-forests reflect the lights of everlasting morals, and whose fruitful valleys are arrayed in glory with the flowering evidences of immortal truths.' We should think that an excursionist who could find morals and immortal truths thus pervading hill and dale, would detect, not only a sermon, but a sermon by Mr. Bellew in every stone against which he strikes his foot. This eloquent praise of nature occurs in a discourse upon the text, 'Consider the lilies of the field,' &c. Obviously, 'it is necessary to understand the occasion when and the place where our Saviour uttered these words;' and most fortunately the position of the Mount of Beatitudes is known, and Mr. Bellew has been there, and will describe it, as he proceeds to do, in his very best manner. And again, in preaching on the Transfiguration, Mr. Bellew informs us that Christ departed from the shores of his favourite Galilee, and, passing over the chain of hills which bound the lake, he proceeded into the parts of Cæsarea Philippi. At that period the wintry season was not yet past, and 'the lofty ranges of Lebanon must have been enveloped in those vestments of white which upon their summits are eternal.' This fact, it is admitted by Mr. Bellew, is not stated in the narrative. St. Luke perhaps did not feel much confidence in his own powers as a fine writer, or he omitted to speak of 'lofty ranges' and 'eternal snows' because he had something else to say. It is a pity that Lord John Russell does not possess this accomplishment of vividly representing natural objects when he speaks in parliament. His references to Magna Charta in defence of the rights of borough freeholders would be infinitely more effective if he could give the House a description of Runnymede and the present condition of the Bells of Ouseley.

It is quite true that to all our criticisms Mr. Bellew might

answer that his church is crowded every Sunday with eager listeners, and we are ready to allow that it is far better for a congregation to keep awake and attentive to his preaching, than that it should indulge in slumber or in wandering thoughts during the delivery of a plainer and more practical discourse. We have said enough to make it manifest that the sources of Mr. Bellew's success are open to almost every clergyman. It is time now to turn to another celebrity of the pulpit, who has excited during the last three years a much wider curiosity than Mr. Bellew, and who, although not a minister of the Church of England, presents, amid much absurdity and extravagance, an instance of great natural powers skilfully directed to the attainment of popularity as a preacher, which deserves to be well considered by all clergymen who desire to look down from their pulpits upon seats filled with attentive listeners. We are about to introduce to our readers, as a second example of a popular preacher who has at least the recommendation of success, the Rev. C. H. Spurgeon. This gentleman, we believe, calls himself a Baptist, and he preaches often to some thousands of hearers at the Music-hall in the Surrey Gardens, which he occupies until the completion of the new tabernacle which is now building for him. His tone towards the Church of England is not usually one of antagonism, but he seems to look upon 'his good brethren of the Church of England, preaching to a congregation of thirteen and a half in the city of London,' as labouring in their feeble, purblind way to promote the same good cause which enlists his own more vigorous and better-directed energies. Mr. Spurgeon surpasses Mr. Bellew in physical power, and he has also that which for his particular purpose is an advantage, we mean perfect freedom from any of those fetters upon his genius and audacity which the general education and refinement of the Church more or less impose, whether they will or no, upon all her ministers. The difference in mental cultivation between the Established Church and the Denominations may be estimated by examining how far Mr. Bellew and Mr. Spurgeon will respectively venture to advance in the pursuit of methods of popularity in the pulpit. We must, nevertheless, confess that our own sympathy goes much more with Mr. Spurgeon than with Mr. Bellew, and this upon the simple ground that the former owes less to art and more to nature than the latter for the means of his success. Mr. Bellew's sermons are all carefully composed, the bursts of poetic language are touched and retouched, and the memories of Eastern travel, and smatterings in arts and sciences are anxiously displayed to the best advantage; and when the sermon is all written, its

delivery is no less carefully elaborated according to the rules of dramatic art. Mr. Spurgeon, on the other hand, speaks the words that come into his mind while he is in the pulpit. There is no polishing of phrases. His illustrations are usually of the most homely kind. He has never quitted the United Kingdom; is now, he tells us, only twenty-four years old, and his studies appear to have been directed chiefly to the Bible and to the quaint divinity of early nonconformist writers. Mr. Bellew cannot probably be far from forty years of age, and he had been a chaplain at Calcutta, and had held various other duties before he became so popular in London. Mr. Spurgeon says, in one of his sermons, that he began preaching at sixteen, and we can well believe that his great command over simple, expressive language became apparent even at that early age. We have said that Mr. Bellew is only fit to preach to genteel people. Mr. Spurgeon's sermons are perfectly intelligible to the poor, and, at the same time, he has been largely listened to by the rich. A man of fastidious taste would be disgusted by Mr. Bellew's artifices, and he might be equally displeased with Mr. Spurgeon's violence and coarseness, but still he would perceive that nature had endowed the latter in liberal measure with the splendid faculty of eloquence.

Mr. Spurgeon's sermons are taken down in shorthand, and published weekly, at the price of one penny. We select, as an example, a sermon preached on the 3rd of April, of which the title is 'Mr. Fearing comforted,' and the text, 'O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?' The very first page of it suggests a comparison of the author with Mr. Bellew, which is highly favourable to the former. Mr. Spurgeon is insisting that all true Christians have their times of anxious questioning. 'As the farmers say, "The land that will not grow a thistle will not grow wheat;" and the heart that cannot produce a doubt has not yet understood the meaning of believing.' Now this is an apt simile. It is intelligible by everybody, and it is introduced in exactly sixteen words. Mr. Bellew's similes are often forced, and brevity in treating an idea is never a characteristic of his style. Under his hand the surrounding scenery of the barren field would have been sketched, and the poets would have been laid under contribution for epithets of the thistle and the wheat, and the farmer would have been interrogated, and his answer would have been drawn out over half a page. But let us hear Mr. Spurgeon describe the scene of the trial of St. Peter's faith—

'See poor Peter in the ship. His Master bids him come; in a moment he casts himself into the sea, and to his own surprise he finds himself walk-

ing the billows. He looks down and actually it is the fact; his foot is upon a crested wave, and yet he stands erect; he treads again, and yet his footing is secure. "Oh!" thinks Peter, "this is marvellous." He begins to wonder within his spirit what manner of man he must be who has enabled him thus to tread the treacherous deep; but just then there comes howling across the sea a terrible blast of wind; it whistles in the ear of Peter, and he says within himself, "Ah! here comes an enormous billow driven forward by the blast; now surely, I must, I shall be overwhelmed." No sooner does the thought enter his heart than down he goes, and the waves begin to enclose him. So long as he shut his eye to the billow and to the blast, and kept it only open to the Lord who stood there before him, he did not sink; but the moment he shut his eye on Christ, and looked at the stormy wind and treacherous deep, down he went.'

We will venture to say that, whether the congregation be poor or rich, such preaching as this would command attention. Our readers probably know by this time enough of Mr. Bellew's style to imagine how he would have 'done,' as the actors say, the same 'business.' Of course it would be necessary to understand the occasion when, and the place where, St. Peter's faith failed. The sea, and the land around it, must be realized by the congregation, and the poets must assist the preacher to describe a storm. 'The sea of Galilee is surrounded on all sides by chains of hills, which sweep down steeply into the lake.' That is how the subject would have been approached. But let us hear a modern Peter, Mr. Fearing, answer the preacher's question, 'Wherefore dost thou doubt?'

'Because I never was in such a condition before in my life. Wave upon wave of trouble comes upon me. I have lost one friend, and then another. It seems as if business had altogether run away from me. Once I had a flood-tide, and now it is an ebb, and my poor ship grates upon the gravel, and I find she has not water enough to float her—what will become of me? And oh! sir, my enemies have conspired against me in every way to cut me up and destroy me; opposition upon opposition threatens me. My shop must be closed; bankruptcy stares me in the face, and I know not what is to become of me.'

Mr. Fearing, it would seem, is a London tradesman, and it may be observed that Mr. Spurgeon's sermons are principally addressed to the commercial classes. His style, as we have said, suits the poor, but probably the prices of admission to the Surrey Music Hall do not suit them. Many persons of high rank and fortune have been occasionally among his hearers, but the bulk of his supporters appear to belong to the shrewd money-getting world in which he has sought his example of failing faith. Mr. Fearing is thus comforted:—

'All your suffering is sent upon you by your God. The medicine which you now drink is compounded in heaven. Every grain of this bitterness which now fills your mouth was measured by the heavenly Physician.'

There is not an ounce more trouble in your cup than God chose to put there. Your burden was weighed by God before you were called to bear it.'

This, again, is suitable alike to rich and poor. But Mr. Spurgeon cannot always preserve such an elevated simplicity as this. A believer is supposed to be expressing his fears that he has lost communion with Christ. If this believer be Mr. Fearing, a sober, middle-aged man of business, we should not expect that he would open his grief to his spiritual adviser in any such terms as these:—

'Oh! sir, there were times when Christ used to visit me, and bring me such sweet love-tokens! I was like the little ewe lamb in the parable; I did drink out of his cup, and feed from his table, and lie in his bosom; often did he take me to his banqueting house; his banner over me was love. What feastings I then had! I would bask in the sunlight of his countenance. It was summer with my soul. But now it is winter, and the sun is gone, and the banqueting house is closed. No fruits are on the table. No wines are in the bottles of the promise.'

But of course Mr. Spurgeon best knows in what language his own ghostly counsels have been sought. Up to this point he had been preaching to plain men in a plain and yet moving way, and we have praised him for exercising such an uncommon gift. But if portly and serious grocers are in the habit of comparing themselves to little ewe lambs, and express their doubts of ultimate salvation under the metaphor that there is no wine in the bottle of the promise, it is clear that simple language cannot always be expected from the chosen preacher of such a remarkable congregation. They require to hear him speak sometimes of 'Christ's comfortable visits to their souls;' and they like him to describe their own fancied temptations in such terms as these:—

'I am in a workshop where everybody laughs at me. I am called nick-names because I follow the cause of Christ. I have been able hitherto to put up with their rebukes and their jests; but now they are adopting another plan. They try to tempt me away from the house of God, and entice me to the theatre, and to worldly amusements, and I feel that, placed as I am, I never can hold on.'

We shall learn presently that the devil is in considerable hopes of making a profit out of these transactions in the workshop. But how utterly unlike anything in actual life all this sounds—tradesmen of mature years comparing themselves to ewe lambs, and artisans of equally ripe discretion and fixed habits in danger of being enticed into worldly amusements by their companions. It is a pity that the objects of universal laughter cannot perform religious as well as political duties

through the medium of the ballot until they cease to feel jests so keenly. But the pious artisan may be assured that he is in no real danger. He shall not perish, for that would dishonour Christ, and the devil would be heard saying:—

‘Aha! here is a child of God, and God has turned him out of his family, and I have got him in hell at last. Aha! I have one of the jewels of Christ’s crown here. Aha! King with a damaged crown! thou hast lost one of thy jewels.’

Here we must fancy Mr. Spurgeon acting the devil as well as uttering his words—cheerfully rubbing his hands at the new arrival, and then addressing himself in an easy, chaffing way to the upper powers. But such cause for joy Satan shall never have; and therefore ‘good old Mr. Berridge,’ when asked one morning how he did, was perfectly justified in answering, ‘Pretty well, I thank you, and as sure of heaven as if I were there.’ Mr. Berridge, we suppose, felt at that moment unusually like a ewe lamb, and had had a whole bin of bottles of the promise recently laid down in his spiritual cellar. It will be perceived by any one who has read a single sermon by Mr. Spurgeon that Baxter’s ‘Shove for a heavy-sterned Christian,’ and his ‘Hooks and Eyes for Believers’ Breeches’ were suited to tastes and feelings which continue to our own day. Probably Mr. Spurgeon began by adapting himself to his audience, and he has now become a model preacher, whom all others of his sect, if they would be listened to, are obliged to do their best to imitate. The consequence must be, that the dissenting pulpits teem with buffoonery and vulgarity far more offensive than the worst excesses of Mr. Spurgeon, and unredeemed by that remarkable oratorical power which he always shows and far too frequently abuses. He concludes his sermon upon faith thus: ‘I pray God now to apply these words to your comfort. They have been very simple and very homely words; but nevertheless they will suit simple homely hearts. If God shall bless them, to Him be the glory!’ It is a pity that the whole of this sermon does not deserve the character here claimed as well as the greater part of it, and that there should be, or should be supposed to be, persons in the world, high or low, for whom simple homely preaching will not suffice, but they must be indulged occasionally with ewe lambs, bottles of the promise, and the devil rubbing his hands with glee over an accidentally lost soul.

The notion that men can worship in the fields as well as in the church or chapel is combated by Mr. Spurgeon in one of his most effective passages. A holder of this doctrine is supposed to say:—

‘ I spend my Sunday in the open air, in that glorious temple which God has built. How divinely can I worship him there while “ the lark singing up to heaven’s gate ascends ;” while every flower tells us of Him whose breath perfumes it, and whose pencil paints ; while all the cattle upon a thousand hills are lowing forth his praise, I feel that in his temple doth every one speak of his glory. I worship the God of nature.’

‘ It must be allowed that the promoters of Sunday excursion trains are not likely to find more appropriate language than this to defend their principle. How much simpler and more truthful is it than the mountains reflecting everlasting morals, and the valleys arrayed in immortal truths which Mr. Bellew presents to the eyes of a supposed holiday-maker in the country ! But let us hear how Mr. Spurgeon will demolish the argument which he has so strongly stated :—

‘ I have sometimes an opportunity on a Sunday of seeing many worshippers of the God of nature come down the lane where I reside. They consist, for the most part, of men who carry cages with them in which to catch birds on the common. There is another very respectable confraternity of men who go to a boxing-place somewhere about there, where they spend their day in the bowling-alley and divers pugilistic encounters. These might adopt the cry of our genteel sinners, “ We don’t want to go into a church or chapel : we spend our Sunday in the worship of the God of nature.” And very fine worship it is. . . . Don’t believe all the nonsense that you hear from the Sunday league and all that, when they talk about worshipping the God of nature. Do they do it ? . . . Is it not rather a suspicious circumstance that these men, who are so much ahead of us that they worship the God of nature, prefer the company, according to their own confession, of sheep and bullocks and horses and sky-larks, to the presence of the saints of God ? . . . Natural religion is just a lie ; men may say much about it, but it does not exist.’

This, we think, is tolerably hard hitting. Mr. Spurgeon gives no quarter to the opinion that heaven is to be reached by the way of excursion trains. And the Romish doctrine of the efficacy of penance is demolished in the same unsparing manner. Mr. Spurgeon went into a Romish cathedral, and there, to his disgust and horror, saw poor women going entirely round upon their knees to pray before a whole set of pictures. ‘ To give these poor women the rheumatism or something worse, in order that God might be pleased with them, is the most extraordinary way of going to work that I know of.’ And, again, Mr. Spurgeon has been unpleasantly near to monks. ‘ If the monk would gratify his god, he must not wash himself ; for their god is a god of filth.’ And the poor monk must starve and flog himself. ‘ He must flagellate his poor back till the blood runs down in streams.’ The god of the monks evidently delights in blood. ‘ Their god is an old Romish pagan dæmon that was cursed of old and is cursed now.’ Protestantism of the most pugnacious

character could not, we think, demand a more entire pulverisation of the enemy than this. The figment of penance is smashed beyond restoring; and an error of another school, that men can by their works render themselves acceptable to God, will scarcely obtain credit when broadly stated thus:—

‘God shall accept us through what we do. Jesus shall make up the deficiency. He shall darn a hole or two that may occur in the garment, but nevertheless we will stick to the old cloth throughout; and though we do hear that our righteousnesses are as filthy rags, yet we will have them washed and wear them over again, rags though they be.’

But we shall gain a still fuller and more correct conception of Mr. Spurgeon’s style by observing how he deals with the topic of the continental war. One secret of popular preaching is to connect the Sunday’s sermon with the most prominent subject of men’s thoughts during the previous week. On the 1st of May, therefore, a practised orator like Mr. Spurgeon would naturally select for the title of his discourse, ‘War! war! war!’ and for his text, ‘Fight the Lord’s battles.’ He begins with the effective paradox that he is a herald not of peace but of the sword. ‘My voice is still for war;’ thus quotes he from the great Nonconformist poet. But the warfare which he proclaims is against sin, and against all forms of error, and especially against the Romish Church and ‘Puseyism.’ He asks how Cardinal Wiseman pays for all his splendours. ‘Fools, and slow of heart, ye find them much of their wealth.’ If the Cardinal is to preach anywhere, Protestants crowd the chapel and pay for the seats they occupy. ‘The Protestantism of England is the paymaster of the Pope.’ And there are members of the Evangelical party who speak tenderly of ‘Puseyism’—‘And what is that but popery made worse than it was before by being more despicable and deceivable than even popery itself?’ How is it, he asks, that the great preachings have been alternately conducted by High and Low Church? Is not this a speaking of peace when there is no peace? Mr. Spurgeon, we are convinced, is the Palmerston of the religious world. It is his peculiar province to carry on war with vigour. Moderation and pacific purposes are very well at a proper time and place, but this, he holds, is neither the time nor the place for them, as they who organised the great preachings would, if they had been wise, have known. But further, this battle against sin and error must be fought by all Christians. ‘There are some people who are very fond of looking on and not fighting.’ They bless God that the Church is doing a great deal. But when questioned what part they take in the work themselves, they are forced to answer, none. Mr. Spurgeon is ready with his reproof:—

‘Stand out, sir, if you please, you are doing nothing at all.’ But the shirk answers:—‘I contribute to pay the minister, and he has to do the fighting.’ ‘Oh! I see,’ rejoins Mr. Spurgeon, ‘you have been paying for a substitute, have you? But you have made a great mistake. I am not kept to do the fighting for you. I will encourage you to do your duty; but as to doing it myself, no, I thank you.’ Every Christian, then, must fight strenuously the battle of the Lord, and here are the regulations of the code martial, the rule which Christ’s soldiers must all obey.

1. No communication nor union with the enemy.

2. No quarter to be given or taken.

3. No weapons or ammunition taken from the enemy are to be used by Emmanuel’s soldiers, but are to be utterly burned with fire.

It is added, in explanation of this rule, that one of the devil’s long guns is slander. ‘Spike it, and melt it; do not attempt to use it against the enemy.’

4. No fear, trembling, or cowardice.

5. No slumbering, rest, ease, or surrender.

There is much in all this that is extravagant and grotesque, but no impartial reader can fail to see that it is not alone in hatred of popery and prelacy that Mr. Spurgeon resembles the Puritan divines who thundered on the drum ecclesiastic against King Charles. His preaching might have called forth deep hums of approbation from Cromwell’s Ironsides on the eve of victory at Marston Moor. It is easy to ridicule the wild enthusiasm of the troopers and the hypocrisy or fanaticism of their chaplains; but respect will be involuntarily paid to soldiers who never met an enemy that could stand before them, and also to the rude but glowing eloquence that kindled their all-consuming zeal. The concluding part of Mr. Spurgeon’s sermon upon war would have been savoury preaching to a band of sturdy Covenanters upon a lone hill-side. ‘And now,’ he says, ‘before I send you away, I would call out Christ’s soldiers, and drill them for a minute or two.’ We see marching and countermarching of earthly soldiers, and we laugh and say they are doing nothing, but all that manœuvring has its effect in the field of battle. ‘Suffer me, then, to put the Christian through his postures.’ The exercise is as follows:—

1. *Down upon both knees, hands up, and eyes up to heaven!* There is no posture like that. The Christian should be very well practised in it. The praying legion is a legion of heroes. ‘He who understands this posture has learned the first part of the heavenly drill.’

2. *Feet fast, hands still, and eyes up!* ‘A hard posture that,

though it looks very easy.' Many men who can practise the first position cannot practise the second. The hardest thing the children of Israel had to do was 'to stand still and see the salvation of God.'

3. *Quick march, continually going onward!* Many Christians seem to be better skilled in the goose-step than in going onward. 'Soldiers of Christ, quick march! On, on, on, soldiers of Christ! Forward!'

4. *Eyes shut, and ears shut, and heart shut!* This posture is very hard to learn indeed. It is needed when you go through Vanity Fair. Eyes shut against temptation. Ears shut against the praise or scoffs of the world. Heart shut against evil. 'This is a hard posture, but you will never fight the battles of the Lord till you know how to maintain that.'

5. *Feet firm, sword in hand, eyes open, looking at your enemy, watching every feint that he makes, and watching, too, your opportunity to let fly at him, sword in hand!* That posture you must maintain every day. 'Wound your enemy whenever you can. Slay sin, slay error, and destroy bitterness, as often as ye have opportunity so to do.'

6. *Hands wide open, and heart wide open, when you are helping your brethren.* This is a happy posture.

7. *Patient waiting for the advent of Christ.* This is the best posture, looking for his glorious appearance who will get unto himself the victory.

'Now if you will go to your homes, and if divine grace shall help you to put yourselves through this form of drill, you will be mighty in the day of battle to put down the enemy.'

Such, then, is the preaching of one of the chief among the dissenting preachers. Churchmen will say, some with satisfaction, others with a feeling nearer to regret, that sermons like these are impossible, or almost impossible, in the Church. But if this be so, another thing also is impossible, that the Church should ever occupy the place of Mr. Spurgeon's tabernacle. We may be sure of this, that it is not fashion, nor curiosity, nor impatience of a colder ritual alone, that gathers thousands every Sunday to the Surrey Music Hall. Mr. Spurgeon is popular because he has received from nature a precious gift which neither has art spoiled nor have ponderous learning and chill propriety entombed. In no church is eloquence likely to become too plentiful; but surely the Church of England has been too stiff in maintaining a system which goes far to stifle every spark of it that glows amongst her ministers. If a clergyman were to stand up, and offer to preach to an educated congregation without a written sermon, he would, unless a man of thoroughly

established reputation, run the risk of offending his hearers in the tender point of their self-esteem. If they pay the minister the compliment of coming to church, they think that he or his deputy is bound to take the trouble to prepare suitably for their entertainment. To suppose that the preacher is capable of uttering, at the call of the moment, words which may deserve to enter into such well-stored minds, is to be guilty of what—but for the sacred character of the offender—might be fitly designated as impertinence. And, besides, written sermons are a sort of warrant for orthodoxy and respectability, and those who most steadily adhere to them may be considered to stand at the furthest distance from Methodists, Ranters, and all the forms of extravagant and unwashed dissent. And then, again, the preference of the laity for the existing practice rests upon this solid ground, that by compelling the preacher to undergo the labour of writing down every word he intends to utter, good security is obtained that the number of those words will be kept within a reasonable limit. But if a congregation places itself at the mercy of one who can pour forth speech like water, nothing but an absolute rising up in rebellion, and quitting the church in tumultuous protest will suffice, it may be feared, to check the ever-increasing tide of talk.

Such seem to be the reasons which avowedly or tacitly prevail in favour of the almost universal custom in the Church of reading carefully-composed sermons. Extempore preaching has been generally discouraged in high quarters, and young and zealous ministers, who feel their power to stir the slothful hearts of men, are snubbed and silenced until their enthusiasm grows cold, and they fall contentedly into the approved droning method. How strange it seems, that so many men of ready mind, of earnest purpose, and of strong conviction, should, in the prime of youthful energy, be found capable of divesting their pulpit eloquence of even the smallest appearance of spontaneity. Why in any other place, were it only upon a dispute about a debt of twenty shillings in a county court, a man who came prepared with a written speech could not help being carried by his own feelings beyond the words set down for him. It is only in proclaiming the glad tidings of salvation to fallen man, that it is possible to read in a cold, unimpassioned tone from a written paper, without any thought rising freely in the mind, or any impulse that is not perfectly well regulated being felt to utter it in words. Surely among many proofs of the power of conventionalism, this is the greatest, that a minister of religion can bring himself to proclaim its momentous truths with unbroken calmness and unimpeached propriety, and without ever allowing

his sublime theme to gain one moment's uncontrolled mastery over his mind or tongue. But it was not thus that apostles founded or martyrs regenerated Christianity. It is not only that written lacks the fervour of spontaneous oratory. An eye that dreads to lose the proper line of manuscript cannot venture to glance freely around the church, and add the eloquence of look to that of words. A figure stooping over the sermon-book can never use emphatic gesture to enforce earnest speech. If votes were sought for government in the same cold, formal way in which allegiance is claimed for God, that cause would be instantaneously ruined whose adherents showed not the smallest outward token either of faith or zeal. It comes, in fact, to this, that people whose religious sense has been awakened by some other means than preaching, will listen patiently to sermons; but the power of eloquence to reach the unconverted heart is, as far as possible, renounced by the English Church. Meanwhile a Bellew by meretricious art, and a Spurgeon by abusing nature, usurp the influence which should of right belong to abler and more discreet and learned ministers. ;

We can, however, present to our readers one example of a clergyman of the Church of England who adopts nearly the same methods as Mr. Spurgeon, and has attained in a smaller degree to the same kind of success as we have attributed to the Baptist orator. Perhaps we cannot describe the Rev. J. J. West, Rector of Winchelsea, better than by saying that he is one of the very few ministers of the Established Church whom Mr. Spurgeon would not refer to in a tone of patronizing contempt. Both these preachers recite the same hymns and quote the same divines, and they both dwell with equally monotonous earnestness upon the Calvinistic doctrine of election. Some churchmen who read this statement will probably remark upon it, that Mr. West and his congregation might as well leave the Church; while others may say that Mr. Spurgeon and the multitudes who crowd to hear him might as well join it. There is, however, a very great difference between the ceremonies which respectively precede sermons which both in matter and in style present a strong resemblance. It will, perhaps, surprise and offend Mr. Spurgeon's admirers to be told that the proceedings at the Surrey Music Hall are open to an obvious comparison with those of a Roman Catholic cathedral. It strikes a casual visitor that Mr. Spurgeon in his great pulpit is very busy at his work, while the congregation are very contentedly looking on. Even when he gives out a hymn, and multitudes join their voices in singing it to a simple tune, one cannot help suspecting that many of the worshippers are principally desirous of improving such an excellent opportunity

for the exercise of their vocal powers. But when Mr. West ascends the pulpit in one of the London churches where he occasionally preaches, the ordinary prayers and lessons have been previously read by 'my brother Harris,' and the musical propensities of the congregation have been confined within the usual limits. We believe that Mr. West is brought up once a month from Winchelsea to feed a spiritual craving among his hearers, which the resident metropolitan clergy fail to satisfy. Like Mr. Spurgeon, he combines strong doctrine with homely language. 'Eloquence,' he says, 'is very well, and very telling in a Gladstone debating in the House of Commons; but what we want in the pulpit is heart-searching truth, to come through the preacher's tongue into the hearts of his hearers.' This is a most proper sentiment; but we suspect that if Mr. West made it a specialty to enunciate truths, his ministrations at Winchelsea would be seldom disturbed by invitations to preach in London. It is needless to say that the sermons which he delivers have not been written beforehand. One advantage of the extempore method is that the latest impressions upon the preacher's mind can be made available in his discourse. On one occasion the morning sermon had been preached by the Rev. H. Melvill, and Mr. West, who followed in the evening, was able to avail himself of some hints supplied by it. Other clergymen, we believe, sometimes borrow an idea or two from Mr. Melvill, but not with the same promptitude as was displayed in this instance by Mr. West. He is fond of telling his congregation that he has been in doubt what text to preach upon, and has debated the question in his mind while walking up and down the streets of London. But these perplexities seem to us entirely unnecessary. Whatever text Mr. West starts from he always manages to work round to his favourite topic of election. One of his recent sermons was upon the words, 'Thou openest Thine hand and satisfiest the desire of every living thing;' words which may be thought to be as far as any in the Bible from the usual doctrine of Mr. West. 'But,' says he, 'I take this passage *accommodationally* as applicable to the state of the Church of God;' and further on, 'The fourth point is this,—"every living thing"—and I take this *accommodationally* to refer to the people of God.' Mr. West seems to be as much charmed with this strange word '*accommodationally*' as Justice Shallow was with the application of the kindred vocable '*accommodated*' to the domestic arrangements of Sir John Falstaff. It is evident that at this rate a text might be taken even from the first chapter of St. Matthew, and if it were treated '*accommodationally*' we might very soon write Q. E. D. after an enunciation of Calvin's system of divinity.

In the employment of familiar illustrations, Mr. West is almost as liberal as Mr. Spurgeon. He exhorts merchants in their counting-houses to the exercise of occasional devotion. 'Oh! how privileged the merchant telegraphing in mental prayer a message from a broken heart to God in heaven! And oh! how blessed when the answer is telegraphed back into the soul!' The invention of the telegraph, he observes, is a vast stride in science, 'but oh! reflect on the idea of the telegraph of prayer!' Our own reflections, we must own, would scarcely be agreeable to Mr. West. He never writes, and therefore cannot revise his sermons. If he did, the familiar advice to an author what to do when he comes to a fine thing might be worth his notice. But here is another example of the same kind: 'I feel that I stand here to-night a trustee of the Gospel. And what, I ask, would you think of a trustee in worldly things who was unfaithful and dishonest to his trust? Would you not file a bill against him in the Court of Chancery?' Under this fine allegory, Mr. West sets forth the punishment of the preacher who dissembles the doctrine of free grace. In another place he is insisting that mere dry doctrine will not feed the soul. 'What do we want when we sit down to dinner? Something to eat.' And again, in urging the efficacy of Christ's death, he says: 'Here is a Man who is able to pluck my brother Harris from the hell that he deserves, and to save the man in the pulpit who is preaching to you from the curse of a broken law.' If 'my brother Harris' was unconscious of this personal application of the subject to his own case, he certainly could not attribute his slumber to the influence of 'a tedious rector drawling o'er his head.' And, again, if the congregation showed any tendency to the fault of Eutychus, the declaration that, unless Christ had been both divine and human, his advocacy 'would have been of no more use to me than one of you men down in that aisle,' would instantly restore every person there seated, both to consciousness and to an eager desire to protest that he or she had never for one moment been otherwise than broad awake. It is one of Mr. West's principal objects to denounce Arminianism; and as we have said that he can get any sermon out of any text, it need excite no surprise to find the words—'He came not to be ministered unto but to minister,' followed by the comment—'There is a great deal of busy-bodying (if I may so speak), a great deal of Arminianizing and free-willing in these days. There is a great deal (I speak it reverently), of making a lion of Christ.' We must say in justice to Mr. West, and also to the Church of England, that he does not take so many and such

outrageous liberties with sacred things as Mr. Spurgeon, but really this new application of the title of 'the lion of the tribe of Judah,' almost proves that the Establishment can beat the Denominations upon their own ground. Some of Mr. West's expressions, such as 'a cross-handed blessing,' and 'that gigantic scripture in the book of Daniel,' and his perpetual quotations of the doggrel divinity—for it is no better—of Augustus Toplady, have undoubtedly a strong savour of the Tabernacle. Nevertheless, he protests his attachment to the Church, and his sermons bear evidence that the prayers and lessons which he is obliged to read, or at least to hear, are not without effect in mitigating the wild extravagance which in the case of Mr. Spurgeon is uncontrolled by any external influence or authority. Still, if plain speaking be the same thing as good preaching, it will be difficult to compete with Mr. West. Often he expresses what many other preachers feel, a conflict between his desire to go on, and his sense that the congregation would very much prefer that he should stop. 'I am jealous of overstepping the hour in preaching. It may be easier to preach long than for persons to sit and hear long.' Mr. West insists here and there upon his own orthodoxy so anxiously as almost to provoke a suspicion that all is not right. It is therefore satisfactory that the last quotation we intend to make from him should embody the indisputable truth that preaching is sometimes easier work than listening.

If the Church of England cannot boast of the allegiance of Mr. Spurgeon, it may be some consolation that Mr. West declares himself her faithful son. The character of Mr. West's discourses is, however, so very different from that which generally prevails among his brother-ministers, that we are justified in regarding him as almost a solitary exception to the usual practice of the Church. We will only add that he visits London every month, and preaches once at All Saints' Church, Spicer Street, Spitalfields, and once at Trinity Church, Herbert Street, Shepherdess Walk; and that a full congregation always assembles on these week-day evenings to listen to him. This fact must, we fear, be regarded as almost equally exceptional in the Church as is the character of the sermons which people thus crowd to hear. No doubt Mr. West's influence is due to the rigidity of his doctrine as well as to the homely energy of his style. Still the extent of his popularity deserves to be considered by all well-wishers to the Church of England. There are, indeed, many indications that these and kindred facts have not been overlooked by some of those who possess the power to act upon the principles which they suggest. An attempt has been lately made to establish open-air preaching at Covent Garden, with the co-operation of the rector of St.

Paul's Church. If success attends such efforts, it can only be through considering what sort of address is likely to obtain the attention of a crowd of ordinary Englishmen who are quite at liberty to go their own ways. We have given some examples of sermons which certainly possess the merit of gaining listeners, and specimens of a different kind are unfortunately obtainable in too great plenty throughout London. Our chief fear for the success of any attempt to introduce into the Church a more popular style of preaching is derived from considering the opposite faults of those who are likely to be most active in making the experiment. Either they will be young enthusiasts of the 'naked Bible' school of no-thought, or else dignified clergy who, possessing the power to promote, will be tempted to usurp too large a share in the practical conduct of the undertaking. After five-and-twenty years of life as a college tutor, a head-master of a great school, and a high dignitary of the Church, the faculty of preaching to a casual London crowd is by no means certain to have survived the accumulation of years and honours. On the other hand, newly-ordained curates would do well to bear in mind, that it may be doubtful whether nature has bestowed upon them this faculty; and even if they have received it, assiduous cultivation in many ways is necessary to its effective exercise. Speaking to a popular assembly will in general prove far more impressive than reading a prepared address; but only upon condition that the speaker possesses, and has carefully improved, innate aptitude, and has diligently studied and feels thoroughly in earnest about the subject upon which he undertakes to speak.

FRANCE.

La Revue des Deux Mondes, &c. Paris. 1859.

FRANCE, sometimes the object of servile admiration, sometimes of aversion and terror, but always of profound interest to the rest of Europe, is now regarded chiefly with sentiments of mingled wonder and solicitude. At all times imperfectly understood by the people of England, she is now become an enigma impossible to explain, and her political course is less to be predicted or accounted for than that of winds and waves. In this state of darkness on a subject confessedly so important to the tranquillity of the world, the smallest gleam of light may be of value. We do not apologize, therefore, for the somewhat desultory matter which we now throw before our readers. Much of it is the result of observations made on the spot, and bears marks of its origin; some has been suggested by more recent events, and by longer reflection on their causes. To understand these we must travel back over the long and difficult road of French history;—a task which, even were we competent to it, could not be attempted here. We must, however, indicate a few of the facts without which it is impossible to give any explanation of the present astonishing condition of so great a nation.

From the earliest dawn of the French monarchy, France has played a greater part, and exercised a greater influence in Europe than any other country. There were, indeed, periods during which Italy far excelled her in arts and in courtesies, and Spain in arms and in distant conquests; but the influence of these countries was comparatively transient and limited. The central position of France, the character of her population and language—in which, though the Roman element predominated, there was a sufficient admixture of the Germanic to facilitate their intercourse with the nations of either race—gave to France a superiority which no other country ever possessed. Many circumstances conspired with these natural and inherent advantages to raise this favoured land to the highest pitch of glory and prosperity. A royal line of unmatched antiquity, and containing a remarkable proportion of men of ability and eminence; remains and traditions of Roman civilization, blended with the free spirit and institutions of the Franks; the early establishment of schools of learning and science, and the copious and unbroken supply of renowned teachers and writers; the

Germanic respect for women, combined with the grace and politeness of chivalry, and set off by courtly manners and a natural turn for gallantry; a country fertile, well watered, accessible to commerce; a climate suited to all the uses and enjoyments of man;—these are a few of the prerogatives of France. How could she fail to become the eye of Europe?

And, accordingly, that was her position up to the time when her fatal triumphs reached their climax, and the tastes and sentiments of the people, always leaning rather to the showy than the useful, became radically perverted by success. Dazzled by the magnificence of the court of Louis XIV., elated by the homage, voluntary and involuntary, paid to their political and social superiority by all Europe, the French people suffered the last feeble remnants of free institutions, or of legitimate and regular intervention in their own affairs, to be destroyed and effaced.

In every country the aristocracy (call it by what name you will) is naturally an object of envy and dislike to a considerable portion of the population; and can only hope to keep those feelings in check by proving, to the satisfaction of reasonable men, that it exercises important and beneficent functions in the state. Unhappily, the aristocracy of France, as a body, seems never to have had this conception of its position: indeed, if we look into the numerous and lively pictures which represent the interior of French society, we shall be convinced that, whatever were the *social* ties which bound together its different members—and among so amiable and social a people these could not be wanting—*political* ties between class and class there were none. They had never sought to establish such. The king occasionally courted the favour of the people, but only as an ally against the nobles; the nobles, even when in arms against the king and against each other, never seem to have conceived the idea of establishing their power on a broad and secure basis by an intimate and mutually beneficial alliance with the people; the *bourgeoisie*, despised and *froissée* by the nobles, detested those above them, and had no political sympathy with those below them. Politically, indeed, the *people* did not exist. Those who should have been their political leaders contented themselves with being their military chiefs; and while nothing was done to cultivate among them the intelligence or the habits of political life, nothing to make them understand the duties, or aspire to the character of a Citizen, appeals were constantly made to their naturally irritable vanity and their admiration of force. Thus, looking back through the long vista of ages, we trace the origin of the political helplessness

ness and the military ability which have been exhibited in such striking contrast in our own times.¹ In the innumerable records relating to the civil wars of France, we recollect but one slight suggestion of the expediency of introducing a popular element into the government. This occurs in the first sentence or two of the Memoirs of the Duc de la Rochefoucauld. Generally speaking, we meet with no indication of the kind. The people are mere instruments of the passions and the projects of the great. The noblesse of France was a tree dwarfing and overshadowing the humbler plants beneath it, and exhausting the soil, into which it sent no roots capable of sustaining it against the shock of the tempest.

And if this was the position of the nobles as towards the people, their relations to the monarch were no less perilous and unsatisfactory. While they obstinately refused to abate any of their most injurious and offensive pretensions in favour of the people, their blindness to their unstable and unsupported condition was fully equalled by that of the monarchs or their ministers; who, by depriving the nobility of local influence and national importance, left the throne bare of courageous and authoritative advisers, and of all substantive help or support. The aristocracy, obnoxious to the jealousy of the crown and the envy of the people, did nothing to defend its rights and its power against the encroachments of the former, or to justify its existence and its privileges in the eyes of the latter. Individuals among them exercised power; but, as a political body, they had ceased to exist, long before the terrible moment of political conflict; and the prestige of a long unbroken line of kings, the sentiment of loyalty and the habit of obedience, were all that remained to keep together the mighty fabric of the French monarchy. When, therefore, the throne was overthrown, the better and wiser part of the nation looked around in vain for a rallying point, and for leaders who might help them to save the country from desolation. Then was seen the utter helplessness of masses of unorganized individuals;—a spectacle which France has again and again exhibited to the eyes of astonished Europe,—which she exhibits at this moment. There were not wanting among the French nobility men of the highest and noblest qualities, men willing to make every conceivable sacrifice to

¹ We remember being struck with the answer of a French lady, to whom we expressed our amazement in '48, at seeing such a society as that of France allow itself to be completely overthrown and trampled under foot by a despicable mob. 'Mes compatriotes ne sont bons à rien,' said she, 'qu'un fusil à la main.'

their country. As individuals, they were respected and admired ; but they had no organization, no habits of corporate action, no defined place and function in the state, no local authority, no legal power of calling around them bodies of men habituated to act with and under them, and to regard them as their natural leaders. And when the ruin was consummated and the task of reconstruction was to begin, we find again the noblest isolated examples of probity, public spirit, courage, humanity—every virtue that can adorn a patriot or save a country ; but no power of uniting for useful purpose or of concerting practicable measures. Even the instinct of self-preservation failed to produce any attempt at a common defence ; and this great, able, and brave people presented the astonishing spectacle of a sheepfold in which a few wolves are gorging themselves unresisted with blood.

As a nation, France was utterly helpless. As an army, she once more showed that her ability and her courage had not deserted her. She had found that, without which she was nothing, and could do nothing—military organization and a master. She breathed once more the intoxicating incense of glory, and she once more accepted that as a compensation for national prosperity and stable institutions. For a while the national vanity and love of display to which her ruler made such constant and successful appeals, and for which he expressed in private such boundless contempt, reconciled her to all sacrifices,—even to that of the freedom she had paid so dearly and so vainly to obtain. The men who undertake the arduous and perilous task of reconstituting society in ruins are rarely those who sincerely desire to surround themselves with institutions which will serve as permanent limitations to their own power ; and the men upon whom that task has unhappily devolved in France, have been below the lowest average of human magnanimity and forbearance. A body strong enough to support the throne would also of necessity be strong enough to control it ; and not only was this intolerable to a monarch like Louis XIV. (to whom the smallest question of his sole and illimitable power appeared blasphemy), but the military adventurer who rose upon the ruins of the ancient monarchy was even more intolerant of opposition, more arrogantly determined to extinguish every kind of authority that did not emanate from himself, than any monarch born to absolute sway. Thus the same political impotence, the same habit of looking from all points and on all emergencies to the centre, as the sole source of political life and force, which had prevailed before the Revolution, was perpetuated, nay, increased, after it. Even the faint

shadow of aristocracy which had survived the force and fraud of Richelieu, and the overwhelming personal influence and dazzling corruption of Louis XIV. had vanished; and between the absolute ruler and the people there remained nothing—not even a voice. Restrained by no authorized warning, and by no legal check, the soldier to whom France had given herself exhausted her wealth, her blood, and at length her patience; and fell, first rendered giddy, and then overwhelmed by the weight of uncontrolled power and undivided responsibility.

The state of the public mind in France at this period is described by M. Guizot, in his '*Mémoires*,' with an eloquence only surpassed by its truth.¹ In contemplating that picture, we see that Napoleon had neither the ability nor the desire to rear or to consolidate a lasting social fabric.² It may, indeed, well be doubted whether that is a work which one man, or even one generation of men, can ever accomplish; but even the first groundwork of it cannot be laid without a breadth and elevation of mind, a depth and variety of knowledge, a self-abnegation and a zeal for mankind, which so profound an egotist was incapable of even surmising.

When the imperial pageant disappeared, the restored monarchy, which hoped to find some vestiges of the oldest throne and the most illustrious aristocracy of Europe, on which to rebuild its new sovereignty, found nothing but scattered ruins. The cement that had bound them was utterly gone. The monarchy had no longer the smallest hold on the reverence of the people. The nobles, who had never understood the duties or the interests of an aristocracy, were not likely to be able to conceive or to seize the place in the state which they had lost by their suicidal feuds and their heartless indifference to the people.

By all reflecting and far-sighted men the restored monarchy was hailed with joy. Not that it did not contain many elements of difficulty and danger, or that it approached perfection in any respect; but they felt that an hereditary throne, based on constitutional guarantees, was a foundation on which a structure admitting of indefinite extension and improvement might be gradually erected. Time would remove many obstacles, perseverance more, and free discussion would gradually throw

¹ Vide pp. 24, *et seq.* vol. i.

² 'Si un jour on pouvait se dire, Voilà un ordre de choses stable et tranquille, voilà un successeur désigné qui le maintiendra; Bonaparte peut mourir, il n'y a ni trouble ni innovation à craindre—mon frère ne se croirait plus en sûreté.'

This was said by Joseph Bonaparte to Count Miot de Méliot in 1802. Vide *Mémoires*, &c., vol. ii., p. 49.

light upon all dark and defective points. But besides that it had the radical and incurable vice of being imposed by foreign conquerors, there was nothing in the restored government to win the affections or seduce the imagination of an excitable and unreflecting people. Strictly speaking, the French had, and have, no public *affections*, but Napoleon had powerfully acted on their imaginations; and now that the country began to breathe again after her long exhaustion, and to recover a little from the wounds he had inflicted on her, his memory was evoked as a continual insult and menace to the government hardly struggling into life.

Among a people so intensely *frondeur* as the French, the sling will never be long unarmed. Everything, good or bad, becomes a missile to hurl at the head of authority or of eminence. It was therefore to be expected that men would be found eager to devote their talents to the task of rendering the establishment of a stable government impossible. It must be acknowledged that their efforts were, both then and later, crowned with unexampled success. Some have made history subservient to the purpose of glorifying reckless and remorseless ambition; some have tried to mislead a vain and ignorant people on the causes of national prosperity, the true and rational ends of government, and the healthy relations of countries to each other. Some have employed the powerful engines of wit and imagination, the seductions of eloquence, the charms of music and of verse, to diffuse among the people the most pestilent sentiments that it is possible to excite. Fortune, so often cruel to France, gave her at once a Charles X. and a Béranger. The mischief done by the bigotry and incapacity of the one was, however, brief and remediable compared to that done by the other. We have never been able to understand how persons who pretend to political knowledge or political principle, could admire a man who used the most remarkable power of acting on the popular mind, in ceaseless endeavours to bring them into contempt. In the verses inspired by this disastrous talent, the true welfare and honour of nations is treated with ignorant scorn. Force is the sole object of respect; and a tyranny raised on the ruins of all social distinctions and independent powers is preposterously called liberty. The seed, which Béranger sowed with so skilful and unsparing a hand, fell on a soil well prepared to receive it. The French people have no political attachments. 'On n'a de l'attachement pour personne en France,' was the sad reply of one of her most able and patriotic citizens, to our inquiry, whether there were any man around whom the people would rally in times of trouble. There is none of that feeling which

leads a reasonable and grateful people to regard the failings or faults of its eminent and faithful servants with tenderness. No genius, wisdom, or virtue, no length or splendour of service, can secure those in authority from the sneers, the suspicions, and the calumnies of a people who regard authority as a usurpation and a wrong. So long as that authority is strong and severe enough to inspire terror, it is safe; but no longer. Why does the nation which affected to find the corruptions of the government of Louis Philippe intolerable submit quietly to the thousand-fold grosser corruptions of that of Louis Napoleon? Simply because the mild and pacific character of the former sovereign robbed the supreme power of that element of terror without which it seems that it cannot be respected in France.

The mixture of insubordination towards regular and mild authority, and of submission to brutal tyranny, is, unhappily, no new characteristic of the French people.

‘Nous donnons un nouvel exemple,’ says Mirabeau, ‘de cette aveugle et mobile inconsidération qui nous a conduit d’âge en âge à toutes les crises qui nous ont successivement affligés. Il semble que nos yeux ne puissent être désillés, et que nous ayons résolu d’être, jusqu’à la consommation des siècles, des enfants quelquefois mutins et toujours esclaves.’

But it is needless to insist on a fact obvious to all the world, and reluctantly admitted by the truest and most faithful lovers of their country. The really important question is, whether the disease is incurable, and if so, in what is it likely to result.

After the fall of the restored monarchy, it was succeeded by a fresh modification of constitutional government, which, with a moderate share of prudence and forbearance on the part of the people, might have gradually assumed a form suited to the age and the nation in which it was to exist. But so far from recognising the duty and necessity of guarding with care institutions round which it was once more possible to rally; of preserving the framework of a constitution—patiently but firmly remedying its defects, and supplying its inevitable deficiencies—the incurably *frondeur* spirit of the French again set to work to render the government odious and ridiculous. Instead of organizing a serious and legitimate opposition, which might have defended all that was valuable in the monarchy, while it controlled the errors and encroachments of the monarch, the overthrow of the actual holders of power, at whatever price, seemed to be the one thing aimed at; and it became obvious that, however noble and patriotic the intentions of individuals, there was no considerable body of men in the country who had any settled purpose of defending constitutional monarchy as an

institution, without reference to the actual monarch. Everything, as heretofore, turned on the qualities or the faults of individuals.

Much has been said about the faults and errors of the king and his illustrious minister, to which the Revolution of 1848 is ascribed. We are far from supposing them faultless or unerring. The king relied on his own personal influence and exertions, and on the consciousness of his good intentions, rather than on institutions;¹ but in this he only shared the general sentiment and habit of the country. M. Guizot exhibited, perhaps, too great a mistrust of the qualities and talents of the French people for self-government; and probably had no great hope of good to result from extending that power among a people so excitable, so credulous, and so utterly disinclined to work steadily and consistently for public objects. If there are any who now think he was mistaken, and that he underrated the employment which the mass of his countrymen were likely to make of political power, the opinion of such judges need hardly disturb the lofty and cheerful serenity which is the appropriate reward of a life spent in efforts to serve mankind, and especially his country. M. Guizot does not lose 'heart or hope,' even for France; much less can he despair of justice to himself. Not, assuredly, that he would claim for himself, any more than we would claim for him, exemption from errors; but posterity will measure these against his services and his virtues, and against the errors of his more fortunate cotemporaries; and will pronounce a verdict which his friends can anticipate with as much satisfaction as confidence.

It is, however, our firm conviction that whatever faults were committed by Louis Philippe or his government they did not cause, though they perhaps precipitated, the Revolution of 1848. No sovereign and no ministry that has existed in England in our time, or in any time, could have withstood the incessant assaults and the unfair sap to which that government was

¹ Since writing the above, we have seen, as our readers probably have, the remarkable private letter written by Louis Philippe to his nephew, the Grand Duke of Tuscany (vide 'Times,' April 20). Nothing that has been said or written in defence of the unfortunate king seems to us so persuasive as the humanity and *bonhomie* which breathe through this letter. There is something very affecting in the naïve and undoubting manner in which he congratulates himself on his success in conciliating his subjects, and establishing constitutional government, after seventeen years of labour for the welfare of France. This letter goes far to explain his conduct in 1848. He was evidently entirely unprepared for the abyss which opened under his feet. When we read his kindly and hopeful expressions we feel that he *must* have been stricken to the heart, and cease to wonder that he made no attempt to save his throne, or France.

exposed; combined with the total want of respect, sympathy, and support from the class most interested in its permanence. The indifference or ill-will of the mass would not have brought about the miserable catastrophe we have witnessed, had not the middle classes shown themselves equally stupid and malignant as the lower. They beheld all these attacks on the throne they had established (and which was their only safeguard) not only with indifference, but with a sort of malicious delight which it was frightful and exasperating to contemplate. Nobody who lived through the years 1846-7 at Paris and in Parisian society can recollect without a sort of shudder the sinister omens with which the very air seemed filled. To Englishmen, accustomed to the vehemence of political discussion and the unfairness of party warfare, there was nothing new or alarming in the debates in the Chambers, violent and unfair as they were. It did, indeed, excite some surprise and much regret, to hear men eminent for talent, high in social position, and destined, as one thought, for better things, *exploiter* such a miserable affair as the 'Indemnité Pritchard,' and stir up all the smouldering embers of national irritability and hate in order to unseat or damage a great rival. We say this in no spirit of self-exaltation. We have of late had too many disgraceful exhibitions of the same kind, to leave us the smallest right to speak of the conduct of public men in England as superior to that of their neighbours. But what struck us was, the state of the public mind beyond the regions of political life:—an *acharnement* against the government without reason, measure, or purpose, 'the malignant credulity' which is one of the precursor symptoms of revolutions, carried to a pitch that seemed to level all the barriers between the improbable and the impossible. Provided it was but *bad enough*, and directed against certain persons, anything, however incoherent, was greedily listened to and believed. Tragical events or terrible crimes, wholly unconnected with political causes, such as occur in all ages and under all governments, were, with incredible promptitude and ingenuity, made in some way or other to emanate from the government; and a royal house remarkable for its good morals, *bonhomie*, and family affection, was covered with the venom of foul and ruthless tongues. All classes seemed to join in this malignant gossip, the object of which was, in the last resort, the king and the government.

But perhaps the most striking of these dark presages was, the effect produced by M. de Lamartine's 'Histoire des Girondins.' Nobody who lived in the society of Paris at that moment can forget it. In every salon the same subject was discussed—in every one, with the same passion—exultation on the one side,

consternation on the other. The ghosts of the 'Terror' arose, mournful or menacing, before the eyes of those who had lived through that period, or had heard its frightful details from their fathers. In the midst of the loudest expressions of admiration some voice ever arose which sounded like an awful warning. In one salon it was a woman of illustrious name and descent who burst into tears as the fate of her parents was recalled to her; in another, an aged nobleman, who covered his face with his hands, and, shuddering, exclaimed, '*Messieurs, je vous prie de vous rappeler que j'ai vu tout cela.*' Never shall we forget the look of consternation and disquiet which overclouded every face at that action and at those words; nor the dead silence that followed. Nor did imagination only pander to the passions of the mob. Even science descended from her pure and lofty sphere to the same foul ministry. We went to hear M. Arago pronounce the *Eloge* of Bailly, in the hope of learning what were the services rendered to science by that eminent and ill-fated man. What we did hear was, a series of claptrap appeals to the political antipathies of his audience; and cruel, unmanly, unjust sneers at that noble queen and most unhappy woman, whose horrible fate is the opprobrium of France.

These were the shades that men of genius and of science loved to evoke; these the long-buried fires which they sought to rekindle. It is impossible for any one who did not live in the midst of the gathering storm to imagine how many such influences were at work in all directions. We heard, with amazement and dread, adherents of legitimacy, elegant and disdainful ladies, rejoicing at the defeat of the ministry which was the one barrier (as they found to their cost) between them and the mob. With still greater amazement, and still more gloomy forebodings, we heard shopkeepers (men who have shown themselves incapable of learning from the most terrible experience) talk with their usual levity, of 'giving a lesson' to the king and the government.

In the midst of this violent, but vague and purposeless ferment, two sets of agitators were principally to be distinguished; those who knew what they were about, and those who did not. Among the latter, were to be classed the leading members of the opposition, several of them among the foremost men of France in science and literature, eager to occupy the first posts in the state, and the first places in the public eye; utterly incapable, as the event proved, of estimating the difficulties of the situation, or the dangers which they themselves provoked. The last thing which these men could have desired was the domination of the masses, led by a man of their own choosing;

and hence certain to represent the envy of superiorities (especially the two superiorities which are unattainable by labour or by money—birth and genius), the low prejudices and passions and the adoration of brute force which are among the motive powers in all revolutions, but which act with peculiar intensity in France. These men have discovered too late what it is to set them in motion. To say they did not design the mischiefs they brought about, is to repeat the *banale* apology of that presumptuous, uncalculating recklessness which is among the most disastrous of qualities in men who have anything to do with public interests.

The other party perfectly understood what they would have—it was Revolution. The more honest and the least clear-sighted among them aimed at a well-regulated republic—the yet undissipated dream of that class of politicians who have never yet effected anything but the destruction which they did not intend. The lawless and desperate—the only successful calculators—aimed at the confusion which is their element, and in which they find the gratification of all their strongest passions—vanity, envy, rapacity, and ambition.

In speculating on the past and the future of France, we cannot help involuntarily applying them with profound thankfulness, or with equally profound anxiety, to the past and the future of England. Both for this reason, and because it concerns us to understand those on whom our tranquillity so greatly depends, we would fain try to discover what are the peculiarities in the French character which have led France to the perplexed and troubled state in which we see her, and to affect materially the probability of her emerging from it.

What then, we would ask, are the chances that France, after all the storms she has encountered—or rather raised—will arrive at that condition of stability and order, and to that qualified contentment on the part of the people, which is all that is consistent with the imperfection of human things? And if, as we fear, no man in France, or elsewhere, will be found bold enough to hazard an answer to this question, What are the causes that render the future of this splendid and powerful country so dim and doubtful? Why, as soon as the tempest has spent its rage, do fresh thunder-clouds gather on the horizon, so that the atmosphere is constantly charged with oppressive vapours, and the hearts of men are disquieted with fears of new calamities? To this latter question the reply is, we think, not impossible, but long and complex, and, if convincing, is far from consolatory.

To hear ‘enlightened Liberals’ talk, you would think that

government was the easiest thing in the world; that it was, at the best, a necessary evil; and the only serious question, how to have as little of it as possible. The masses, who feel the restraints and the burdens of government, and who forget, or never perceive, that they owe to it everything that raises human life above a daily and deadly fight for bare sustenance, are willing enough to be convinced by these representations. It can never be too often repeated, that to establish a durable form of government is a work requiring much time, much wisdom, much forbearance; together with the aid of everything that can act on the sentiments of unreasoning men. When all these have been long in operation, habit is super-added; and by the combined forces of reason, sentiment, and habit, governments are gradually and tranquilly accommodated to the changes in human society and the growing demands of civilization. It is manifest, however, that for this true political life of a nation, as for family life, compromises must incessantly be made; different functions must be allotted or conceded to different classes; pretensions, and, above all, the most absurd of pretensions—that to equality—must give place to considerations of general and permanent utility; the relative value of things must be weighed; the possible must be steadily kept in view, and chimeras banished from political discussions and projects. These are a few of the conditions indispensable to stable and tranquil government. How many of these are or have been fulfilled by the State and people of France? The answer is not encouraging.

In no civilized country is political and economical knowledge less diffused among the people—even among the middle classes. The often misapplied sentence of Bacon, 'Knowledge is power,' might, with greater utility, be parodied, 'Knowledge is safety.' The gross mistakes and absurd illusions to which ignorance lays men open are pregnant with danger; and on no subject is the danger of such magnitude, as on the causes which govern the welfare of nations. When we see that even in England, where political and economical knowledge is far more widely diffused than in any other, there are men who have sufficient confidence in the ignorance of the masses, to tell them, that evils clearly arising from causes over which governments have no control (causes perhaps within the control of the very classes addressed), are to be imputed to the selfishness, rapacity, and cruelty of the class to which the business of government is intrusted; when we see these malignant misrepresentations accepted by crowds of dupes, how can we wonder that they are greedily adopted by the far more ignorant popula-

tion of France? But this is not all. The English people are accustomed to look to a long discussion of their grievances, as the condition antecedent to their removal, and have confidence in the ultimate triumph of truth. There is no such sentiment in the French people. They have no confidence in anything but the strong arm. How often did we hear it said of the Chambers, 'Ce ne sont que des bavards;' 'Ils ne font que de bavarder!' and other expressions of ignorant impatience at hearing both sides of a question. This is partly to be expected and allowed for in any country unused to the tediousness and apparent inanity of the greater portion of parliamentary harangues; yet the examples of Belgium and Sardinia¹ (not to mention some German States) show that all peoples have not the same intolerance of discussion or contempt of argument; nor the same habit of recurring to force as the only efficacious remedy for political and social evils. What makes the matter nearly hopeless is, the small degree of sympathy which the mass of the French nation has shown with the crushed and fettered press. Whether the public mind is beginning to awaken to this calamity we know not: short after the *coup d'état* we could get no reply from shopkeepers, manufacturers, and small proprietors in the provinces, but, 'Cela regarde Messieurs les hommes de lettres à Paris;' and generally followed by, 'Ils ont trop abusé de la presse; ils ont fait beaucoup de mal;'—undeniable truths, and well worthy the attention of all who are inclined to abuse so mighty an instrument. A free press is, we fear, regarded by a large proportion of the middle and trading classes in France as a dangerous solvent or irritant of society, and incompatible with peace and order.

We should hardly believe how profoundly the minds even of men who might be supposed to have some idea of the structure of political society may be perverted, did we not reflect on the tendency of a succession of revolutionary governments to bring back the reign of chance and force. We remember a conversation which struck us powerfully as illustrating this deplorable deterioration of opinion. It turned on the present régime and ruler of France. An Englishman observed that whatever advantages they might offer, security and permanence were not among them;—'for,' said he, 'if the emperor were to die or to be deposed, what then?' 'Oh! on en choisirait un autre!' was the reply; given with the utmost confidence and complacency; evidently without the smallest

¹ This sentence was written before Sardinia had bartered her constitutional liberties for an ambitious dream.

idea that what the speaker proposed was nothing less than a return to the rude expedients of the most barbarous times, the confusion, anarchy, and violence produced by which had been slowly superseded, through the travail of ages, by the recognition of hereditary rights and stable institutions. These latest and highest products of civilization he spoke of as utterly rejected by France, adding, 'Tout ce qui se présente avec un titre à la main est odieux aux Français.' It might be supposed that the man who enounced this astounding disposition of his countrymen was a leader or an associate of 'Rouges,' or of those whose professed object it is to overturn society. No such thing. He was a clever, thriving and respectable manufacturer, a man of some scientific acquirements, and of considerable quickness; he had, in short, all the interests and capacities that generally incline men to see the frightful perils of a state of public opinion in which every sort of claim or prescription (*titre*) is an object of hostility and hatred; in which nothing is removed out of the domain of competition and struggle, or of chance, and society becomes the scene of a perpetual scramble for all things. We know how little value is generally to be attached to the expressions of individuals; but considering the character and position of the person in question, which had nothing in them exceptional or extravagant, we have always regarded this as one of the most melancholy symptoms of the national disease that have come in our way. If such are the sentiments of men who enjoy all the benefits of civil society, all the protection which rights ('*titres*') give to the property they acquire, what is to be expected from those whose obligations to law and government are, though not less real, so far less obvious? The envious determination to recognise no legitimate claims, no established superiorities, is perfectly compatible with abject submission to despotism, provided only that the despot be the creature of popular caprice. The same prosperous and democratic manufacturer said, in answer to some remarks on the ignoble yoke under which France had fallen, 'Je vous assure que le gouvernement ne me gêne pas;' and turning to a fellow-countryman, he said, 'Trouvez-vous qu'il vous gêne?' The gentleman appealed to said nothing.

The hatred of prescriptive rights is but a branch of the hatred of all superiorities, born of vanity and envy. One fruit of it is the spirit of insubordination which we continually heard complained of as extending through all classes, and rendering the unequal relations of life (and how many of these are equal?) a series of conflicts. We are far from affirming that this is peculiar to France. America is, as we know, conspicuous for it; but

there, as, from the peculiar economical condition of the country, independence is far more easily acquired, insubordination loses much of its hostile spirit. It is rather grotesque than rancorous. In England it is growing, and will no doubt continue to grow, fostered by numerous social phenomena, which this is not the place to inquire into. But it will probably be long before it assumes the same proportions as in France. There are few of us who do not acknowledge superiors, or to whom that acknowledgment causes any very severe mortification. Great pains are now taken by the false friends of the people to instil into their hearts the corrosive poison of envy, which Mr. J. S. Mill justly calls 'that most anti-social and odious of all passions,'—as yet, we believe, with small success. But in France we do not see what is to prevent its eating away the very vitals of society. It is a French writer who says that 'a characteristic feature of Frenchmen is, never to think themselves high enough, until they have brought down others to the lowest level they can.' To a man with these sentiments every superior, in whatever sense, is an enemy and a wrong-doer. We remember a young man respectably born, highly educated, accomplished, good-looking—labouring under none of the disadvantages which provoke envy, telling a lady whose salon he had frequented with *empressement*, that he could not come any more. Why? what was the matter? 'It was so unpleasant to meet two or three young Austrians of high rank' (who happened to be then in Paris, and were among the guests). 'Why? what had they done?' 'Oh, nothing; they were perfectly well-behaved, but he could not endure the presence of men of superior birth.' 'Why,' said the lady, 'do you not, then, hate any man who is taller than yourself, or handsomer?' 'Pour plus grand, celà ne me fait rien,' replied he, 'mais plus beau—oui—c'est un tort qu'il me fait.' This sounds like a caricature, or a burlesque; but the latter words express, we are convinced, a sentiment very common in France. Any advantage possessed by our neighbour is, in this view, a *tort* done to ourselves. And indeed the demand for equality, pushed to its legitimate consequences, ends in that.

The relation between master and servant, or master and workman, becomes one of incessant struggle to maintain authority on the one hand, to resist it on the other. We asked a very fashionable and thriving ladies' shoemaker near the Madeleine why he employed only German workmen. He said, 'C'est tout simple, they will do what you bid them. I have worked among French journeymen myself, and I know that they regard obedience to orders as a sort of servility.' Some German

friends of ours received a similar answer at one of the greatest hotels in Paris. They observed that they were attended entirely by Germans, and signified to the master that this was unnecessary, as they were all perfectly familiar with French. He replied that he had only German waiters in his house; that he found they would do what they were told, and that it was vain to expect this from Frenchmen. We heard, on more than one occasion, expressions of the bitterest discontent from female servants at being '*née pour servir*.' The word '*servant*' is resented as a deadly insult; and an English lady who innocently used it was told, in our hearing, '*Qu'il n'y a pas de servante en France; que ce nom est bon pour les Anglaises, qui sont esclaves*.' With revolt in their hearts, they seem to find some alleviation for the inequality of condition to which necessity compels them to submit, in insolence and familiarity. Let us not be supposed so heartless and tasteless as to object to the engaging familiarity of a faithful, good-natured French servant; or to wish to exchange it for the impenetrable reserve and indifference which generally characterize the English of that class. The cordiality and *bonne grâce* which give a charm to upright actions were among the acknowledged distinctions of the French people. They are now become rare, and can hardly be expected to survive a state of feeling which tends to convert society from well-ordered and decorous procession, into a chaotic and struggling crowd, where each man tries to trample down the one before him. The rude and aggressive familiarity we speak of is the child not of love but of hate. It is an attempt to humiliate a superior. Sometimes one still meets with examples of a pleasant naïve familiarity which are amusing enough. We may give one from our own observation. A friend of ours, living near the Madeleine, was invited to dine in the Champs Elysées, and the hostess's carriage was to fetch her. At the hour appointed she was ready. After waiting some time under the uneasy consciousness of being too late, she sent down her *femme de chambre* to order the porter to get a '*remise*' instantly. As the man went out at the gate, he saw a carriage standing quietly near the house, and on inquiry found it was the one expected. The lady, on being told, ran down and jumped into it, saying to the coachman, '*Pourquoi n'avez-vous pas fait annoncer la voiture?*' '*Mais, madame,*' said he, smiling, '*je vous ai vu à la fenêtre, et je vous ai fait une signe de tête*.' This was said with an air of good-natured reproach for not coming when he beckoned. This pleasant little illustration of the taste for *égalité* and *fraternité* occurred on the memorable 21st of February, 1848; the day on which men were busied, at

no great distance, in making the preparations for the 'banquet' which was to take place on the following day. As the party left the Champs Élysées, they remarked with satisfaction that the night was gloomy and inclement. The owner of the carriage let down the window for a moment, and said, as the wind and sleet drove in his face, 'Ah ! pourvu que cela dure !'

We have dwelt on some of the peculiar features of French society which seem to us impediments in the way of the establishment of internal strength, order, and confidence. Among these is one, perhaps the most pregnant with evil of any—the tone and character of modern French literature. It is, however, a subject requiring a degree of examination which it would be impossible to attempt here ; we prefer, therefore, to leave it untouched. Another which suggests itself is the mischievous predominance of Paris. It is upon the most excitable, the most mobile, the most corrupt part of the population of France that the tranquillity and well-being of the whole country depend. This alarming fact is neither unknown nor agreeable to the provincials ; but they do not seem to have the moral strength or courage to put themselves in an attitude of resistance and self-assertion. There is no end to the contempt of Paris for the provinces, and no end to the submission and humility with which the provincials receive it ; the most intelligent and well-informed among them is cowed by it. We saw a striking example of this no further from the capital than Normandy. We met an exceedingly respectable and intelligent man, holding a post under government of great local importance, and were hearing from him with great interest and satisfaction those details concerning the condition and habits of the people which few Frenchmen are able to give, when a young Parisian came in. We could discern no other merit in him whatever, than that he *was* a Parisian ; but this was apparently sufficient entirely to overawe and suppress the well-informed Norman, who had nothing to set against Parisian coxcombry and *suffisance* but good sense, practical ability, and sound knowledge on subjects the most important to the well-being of mankind. He was wholly ignorant of the small talk and jargon of the salons of Paris, and he not only held his tongue, but seemed to regard the shallow metropolitan with a deference that quite provoked us. Many such signs of conscious inferiority we have seen. Immediately after the Revolution of '48, it is true, the provinces, ashamed and indignant at having allowed Paris to impose upon them a government they detested, threatened to shake off the yoke of the capital, and to try to think and act for themselves. We remember hearing this

sentiment loudly expressed at Amiens, where the very name of republic was held in execration. But we see no reason to think that the provinces have made any advance towards independence of thought or action.

And, indeed, how should they? Who is to begin? Evidently such a movement must have leaders; and Frenchmen will not bear leaders. Who could venture to attempt to play the part of our county magnates? Even if the class of men out of which they arise existed, it would be as hateful to the mass of the people, and to the *bourgeoisie* generally, as the corresponding class in England is to Mr. Bright, and for very similar reasons.

The great manufacturing towns, even if they had the requisite intelligence and courage, are too few and far between in the vast territory of France, to have any joint influence. The small provincial towns vegetate in a state of intellectual penury, of which there is no example in England or in Germany. Our own experience of the resources of a town of 5,000 or 6,000 people, on a high road between two large cities, and not very far from Paris, would not be believed, if we had space for it. A French gentleman well acquainted with the town of Agen, the chef-lieu of a department, the population of which is about double the one just alluded to, has described to us the intellectual stagnation of that place, the entire absence of all the pursuits and occupations which people find, or make, in an English town, as so *désespérant*, that people are fain to have recourse to cards in a morning. Of course there must be intelligent people among them; but what can individuals do, in a society which offers no field for their exertions, and no bodies with which to act? Certainly the innumerable 'societies' and 'associations' in England border on the ridiculous; and some of them occupy themselves more than is agreeable with the temporal and eternal welfare of their neighbours. But to regard their utility as confined to their specific objects, is to take a very superficial view of the case. The fact, that we know how to combine, how to lead, and *how to follow*, is one, the importance of which can never be appreciated without a full knowledge of the political incapacity and helplessness of peoples who have not been able to acquire the habit of prompt and spontaneous organization. Such combinations as are daily made in England for purposes of public utility, are impossible in France. A few years since, a lamented friend of ours, struck with the reports of the London Baths and Wash-houses, used infinite exertions to get up something of the same kind in Paris, by private means and under private management. After a great deal of discussion, it was decided that it was a matter which concerned the public, and therefore the duty of

providing it belonged to 'the State.' It is easy to see that if such a feeling of incapacity to combine for public business of so very simple and limited a kind, and such an absolute reliance on the central authority, are suffered to pervade the whole region of internal political life, you have at once before you a society which cannot defend itself, and must submit without a struggle to force, from whatever side force may come;—whether from a despot, and his instrument, a standing army, or from a despot and his associates, a mob. It is this which fills us with doubt and anxiety for the future of France. Who are to be the auxiliaries of government? for no government can stand without auxiliaries. Are they still to be the army and the mob? or are they to be the classes who have the greatest interest in good government, the greatest intelligence of the duties and powers of government, and, above all, the political sense and political habits which are the long-inherited and most precious birthright of Englishmen? Supposing a kind Heaven to grant to the prayers of Frenchmen who love their country a government and a sovereign worthy of France, will the people understand their good fortune? Will they attach themselves to institutions, if they cannot to men? Will they, for once, forego the dear delight of pulling down?

These are the questions that arise, dark and doubtful, before the minds of those who care for France. If, indeed, the evil spirits which have so long inspired her continue to reign; if the French people find all concession intolerable; if they can endure no social or moral authority, and can submit only to force; if the most degrading oppression from a despotic ruler is more willingly borne than the smallest superiority of a neighbour; then indeed we know not where to look for help, or what hand can be strong enough to save them from themselves. From the time that the only power in human affairs is that of numbers, it is easy to see that every kind of intellectual superiority will be crushed under the iron and implacable *amour propre* of conscious inferiority.

'Les particuliers, laïques et clergé,' says a distinguished champion of free thought, speaking of universal suffrage, 's'y amoindriront; l'état s'y affaiblira, comme eux; et la société, si ce régime devait durer quelque temps pour elle, serait un jour profondément étonnée de l'inconcevable diminution de ses forces intellectuelles.'¹

¹ In 1853, we met at the house of a friend in the provinces one of the former Deputies for the department of ————, where he then lived and where his father had lived before him. At that time he said the Legitimists were losing ground less than before '48. Being asked, who gained what they lost, he replied, 'The Socialists. If universal

It was the purely democratic character of the Revolution of '48 that rendered it at once so disgusting and so formidable. The total absence of a cause and leaders whom any man who had the slightest self-respect could recognise, and the obvious subjection of the higher culture and better sentiments of the nation to all that was lowest in it, distinguished this from every other revolution on record; which, in the commencement at least, has been brought about under great names and lofty pretensions. The spirit of the country had been broken by repeated failure and disappointment; every standard round which high-minded men could have rallied had been overthrown and dispersed, and they stood isolated and helpless, and could only (as we heard one of them say) '*courber la tête*' before the storm. '*Hélas!*' says M. de Chateaubriand, '*nous avons passé à travers trop de despotismes différents : nos caractères, domptés par une suite de maux et d'oppressions, n'avaient plus d'énergie.*'

At the moment when France, wearied and subdued by anarchy, accepted the imperial yoke, M. de Méliot makes the following remarks:—

'Ainsi,' '*se terminait sous un régime impérial une période de plus de treize ans, remplie par une révolution qui, partant de nobles principes de liberté et d'indépendance, conduisit un grand peuple successivement de l'anarchie à la tyrannie populaire, et après avoir abattu celle-ci, du rétablissement de l'ordre à la monarchie absolue.*'

Half a century later, we have seen the same country traverse the same road, to arrive at the same termination. The origin, motives, agents, and conclusion of this second act are, as might be expected, mean and feeble parodies of the first terrible one. But they are its legitimate consequences. The waves raised by that terrific tempest have never been stilled. There have been momentary lulls, but those who looked beneath the surface were always aware that the elements of disorder were there. This may, indeed, be said, with more or less truth, of every thickly peopled country, where the inevitable inequalities of fortune and education seem to press hardly upon masses of men, and to provoke cupidity and envy. But what distinguishes France is (as we have tried to show) the absence of all counteracting or controlling influences; the absence of political convictions and political attachments; the absence of every kind of political power except what emanates either from the central government for the time being, or from the populace; *i. e.* from

suffrage continues, the country is lost.' He related two cases in which whole bands of voters went over in a moment, in consequence of the exhortations of one or two Socialists.

those who dispose, in one form or another, of the armed force of the country.

It is painful to confess that the true and absolute sovereign of France is Fear;—fear of change; which means, as they think, tumult, convulsion, plunder, and bloodshed. We have been surprised to find how little the terror of the ‘Rouges’ is worn out. It is, we are convinced, in the minds of a great portion of the middle classes, as lively as ever. Insecurity of life and property is so far the greatest of all social evils, that no people is to be blamed or despised for submitting to any *régime* that affords protection against that. Louis Napoleon is too sagacious not to admit that the men to whom he really owes his crown are those who in their several degrees contributed to the Revolution of ’48. ‘Un despotisme irrémédiable est la conséquence nécessaire de l’esprit et des doctrines politiques de la révolution.’

In 1855 we were extremely struck with the alarm with which the reports of the proceedings at Angers were received by the *bourgeoisie* of a large provincial town in the north of France. The newspaper from which we extracted the following curious incident of the judicial proceedings was lent to us by an opulent and respectable shopkeeper, who expressed an anxiety which we thought had ere then subsided. There exists among the peasants, and more especially the quarriers of that neighbourhood, a secret association called ‘la Marianne,’ the object of which is the entire overthrow of society, accompanied with pillage and every kind of violence. On the 27th of August, 1855, they assembled at a village called Trélazé, armed with whatever weapons of offence they could collect, and marched upon Angers, forcing all the men on their passage to march with them. They seem to have been under some illusion that their attempt would be seconded in other parts of France. The first witness (who had recently been to Paris) being asked what were his projects, says, ‘Je voulais renverser le gouvernement;’ and again, ‘Je ne voulais que prendre part au renversement du gouvernement et régénérer les lois.’ Upon which mild and modest avowal, the Premier President de la Cour Royale asks—

P. P. ‘Que voulez-vous dire, et de qu’elles lois voulez-vous parler?’

S. (avec complaisance.) ‘Dam’, Monsieur, vous comprenez que dans l’état de dégénérescence où se trouve la société, tout citoyen qui—’

M. le P. ‘Ah, permettez! vous osez bien, du banc où vous êtes, accuser notre société, notre pays, d’être en décadence! La France, alors qu’elle se place plus que jamais à la tête des nations et de la civilisation, dégénérerait? la France, qui se couvre de gloire par ses armes!’

L’Accusé (secouant la tête — ‘Oh!’)

‘One of the conspirators quotes the favourite maxim, ‘Qu’on ne

peut pas faire des omelettes sans casser les œufs !' Another gives as a reason for upsetting the government, 'Qu'il nous donne la famine.' Another, the wise man of the troop, says that they were to demand 'la diminution des vivres ;' but adds, 'Moi, je ne tenais pas beaucoup à cela, parce qu'enfin je ne voyais pas trop comment on l'obtiendrait.'

This is a remarkable specimen of a French conspirator and a French judge. The easy jaunty manner in which the former says, 'Je ne voulais *que* prendre part,' &c.—*only just* wished to help to upset the government and to regenerate the laws is characteristic. Then his answer to the next question. Find us a quarrier in Great Britain who would be able to roll off his tongue, 'l'état de dégénérescence où se trouve la société.' Our poor fellows would never learn such a polysyllabic speech. Admirable also is the quarrier's sense of the obligation under which he lies to regenerate society and the laws ! To suspect him of any doubt of his entire ability to do this small work, would be to do him infinite injustice.

The judge indignantly repels the charge against society and France, and (having doubtless felt his French heart swell with the English praises of his countrymen in the Crimea) affirms that 'France had just then put herself more than ever at the head of civilization and of nations'—(you see what poor devils those Englishmen are!) and assists our conception of what civilization means, by adding, that she (France) 'covers herself with glory by her arms.'

That a government which affects to give plenty should be charged with 'giving famine,' is all fair, and we leave it to reply as it can. The cautious and doubting man who confesses that he did not exactly see how the 'diminution des vivres' was to be obtained, and was therefore not a thing to be much cared about, we regard as wholly unworthy to be a Frenchman. He looks to us far more like a cold, calculating Englishman, who is grovelling enough to have an eye to the possible. But such things are no matter for jest, for by such terrors as these is France induced to submit to be a slave. Only a few days ago we saw a letter from the south of France, full of anxiety about the war, but chiefly lest it should once more let loose the demon of revolution ; 'lest we should have the Rouges upon us again, and then, what would become of us all ? Anything but that !' It will be said that if England were in such a case, the better part of society would at once try conclusions with the dreaded anarchists, and free themselves from this ignoble terror, or die. We believe it confidently. But if England had been subjected to as many revolutions as have shaken France,

she, like her great rival, would have lost her self-confidence and her energy. Englishmen would doubtless refuse to admit that they could ever sink into such a state as to seek shelter from the terrors of anarchy under the shield of despotism. But they know not the effect of the destruction of all that men have been accustomed to respect, to obey, to hold to. If ever we see among us the disregard of consequences, the ungenerous and insincere flattery of the people by those who ought to be their friends and advisers; the unprincipled bidding for popularity, and the reckless use of it when gained; the preposterous and fatal pretension that a new world is to be created by every new generation, and the Past to be thrown aside like a worn-out garment, which have destroyed the dignity and security of France, let us not flatter ourselves that we shall escape the evils under which she groans. The habit of submitting, '*non sans déplaisir, mais sans résistance, à tous les pouvoirs successifs imposés par les chances des révolutions,*' is justly characterized by M. de Vieil-Castel, as '*une des nécessités des temps de bouleversements.*' With the example of France before it, no nation can enter on a course of violent changes, without the full and certain prospect of undergoing that humiliating necessity. '*Les excès commis au nom de la liberté,*' says the same eminent writer, '*inspirent tôt ou tard aux peuples condamnés à les subir le goût, on pourrait presque dire le besoin, du pouvoir absolu.*' But even this expedient, lamentable as it is, does not insure permanent tranquillity; for as he observes, '*Une nation, en s'abandonnant trop complètement à son gouvernement, dans un intérêt mal-entendu de l'ordre et de la paix, le pousse inévitablement à des folies qui compromettent les résultats mêmes pour lesquels on a fait tant de sacrifices;*' an observation naturally suggested by what is now passing in France.

We have, we know how imperfectly, endeavoured to carry the thoughts of our readers to the sources of the present humiliation and the dreaded decline of our great and glorious rival. Let us not fancy ourselves secure from the evils which have followed in dire succession upon *her* fatal mistakes. A Frenchman, driven from France by the calamities and the dishonour of his country, expressed to us his deep disappointment and surprise at finding England tainted with things from which he had always believed her exempt; especially was he astonished at seeing with what favour she viewed a despotism as ruthless and as perfidious as any on record. '*I did not expect to find such a frenchified England,*' was one of his expressions.

We cannot refrain from adding a few passages from the letters of this most upright and high-minded man, who loved the

country he abandoned with a passion which rendered him utterly intolerant of those whom he deemed her unworthy children. His indignation was that of a man wounded in his dearest and holiest affections, disappointed in his noblest aspirations, which were all for France. In answer to a well-meant but feeble attempt to discover some ground for hope and consolation, he says—

‘I cannot reach the heights of your Christian and rather Germanizing philosophy. I am totally unable to feel any pity for my countrymen, because I am satisfied that they are suffering a just punishment, and at the same time unconscious of its being a severe one. I am not good-natured enough to love those I despise, nor philosopher enough to excuse debasement under the pretence of its being a way to regeneration. . . .

‘I am sure you partake too much in our sorrows to take refuge from them in abstract meditations upon the great machinery of which they are but a trifling part. There is no machinery in the world: there is a living community of responsible individuals, who perish when they let themselves perish; or, what is the same, when they prefer the mere outward appearance of life to life itself, and to causes which make it worth while to live.

. ‘I keep apart from my countrymen, because I am not rich enough to subsist in such a place as is now my country without subjecting myself to the conditions which they have approved, nor tame enough to receive them as they are received there.’

The second paragraph in the following letter, written, like the preceding, in '53, will strike our readers as doubly remarkable from the comment upon it, which the events of the last few months have afforded. We have underlined one sentence to which, to use the writer's words, we ‘call the attention’ of the public.

‘I send you two letters which I received some days ago, and which are so characteristic of the situation of France that you will be interested by them. The longest was written by an honest fellow who is somewhat too candid and naïf; his mind, which is not strong, is constantly wrought upon by the double French infirmity; he cannot help worshipping success, and looking for something in philosophy by which success may be made to appear to be right.

‘I call your attention to his ideas about war: they are universally spread in a sort of Polish, Italian circle which he frequents much. *This is one of the revolutionary sides on which the new emperor presents himself.* There is much talk of a revolutionary war among the foreign refugees of a certain description in Paris; as there is of democratic reforms among certain classes of Napoleonic socialists.’

‘My other correspondent is a genuine French bourgeois, a wealthy merchant, with 100,000fr. a year. He speaks in all the sincerity of his soul. You may see that neither of my friends are adversaries to the present government of France; they are bewildered and subdued. They are witnesses taken from the very crowd, and you may judge and conclude surely enough from their evidence. I ask you again, Is there any hope of a better state left to the most sanguine people, where all classes are so totally devoid of moral strength?

‘There are some who feel the abasement of their country, but how few are they! Most of them philosophize about it, and would sneer at any plain man who would think they had better move their little finger to get out of the mess on which they look down fastidiously with folded arms. Symptoms of this intellectual prostration meet you at every step, and on the most trifling occasions.

. ‘The worst malady of France is the profound moral poverty, the complete lack of moral sense in those very classes for whom we have so aptly discovered the name of *gens honnêtes et modérés*.’ I know how much I spent of time, words, ink, and paper, good will and holy rage, all the best that I had to spend, in trying to make something better of those *honnêtes gens*. Alas! I could not, and many higher and abler than I did not succeed better. What is left in a country where you cannot do anything with the “*honnêtes gens*,” nor even with the rogues, as it will sooner or later be peremptorily demonstrated by the present experiment? The few people to whom I shall never be tempted to apply that now so justly derisive appellation of *honnêtes gens*, because they are really honest, are men whose heart is better than their head, who are blessed with eternal youth, and, however old they may grow, never grow wise. I am not sure whether many of them are as yet so daring as to deny the rights and merits of universal suffrage. They are men of principle, but their principles are founded on illusions. And how few are they!

- ‘The real majority, the French mass, is now composed of men of expediency, whose first expedient is to worship force and success, without any other excuse or pretext but that *they are* force and success, and on that very account gods to be worshipped. This is a new feature in the long history of the various modes of human degradation; force and success having usually, up to this time, imposed themselves on their worshippers in a rather decent shape and garb.’

One anecdote, and we have done our melancholy selection. Let us, however, add that the views of our correspondent, though, to a certain extent, shared by all honourable Frenchmen, are certainly more gloomy and desponding than those which men of happier temperament entertain; who, while admitting the greatness of present evils, cannot consent to believe in the hopeless decline of France.

‘After the devastation of the Tuileries I had many private letters of the royal family, which I sent back to the princes; but among them there was one of the Queen’s, which was most beautiful. She wrote to the Prince de Joinville, being alone by herself on the anniversary of the Duc d’Orleans’ death, and she said, she prayed God to protect her sons, dispersed on land and water. I don’t recollect the exact words, but it was so grave, and at the same time so plain, “*la main de Dieu sur la terre et sur les eaux*,” was so naturally spoken of in her unpretending style, that nobody could fail to be struck with the effect of that scrap of paper which the shoes of the mob had stamped with dirty blotches. It looked quite a holy relic. A highly respectable *bourgeoise* entreated me at that time to favour her with it, and to let her keep it as a pious remembrance. She was an old lady, and being very commendable in many respects, her request was granted. Alas! the very same,—a good Christian lady, and an excellent pattern of worthiness in the best of the middle classes of French society, would now make fresh relics of her emperor and

empress, and worship them (in obedience to the direction of her confessor) for their care of religion. There is indeed much stupidity in this debasement.'¹

We cannot conclude without a few words on the subject of the relations between the French and English nations, and the sentiments which it is possible and desirable that they should entertain towards each other.

From the time of Edward III. to the peace of 1815, there was almost always fierce and open hostility between the rulers and peoples; but except during some short intervals there was, at the bottom of the two countries, the mutual respect which is implied in the word rivalry; *i. e.*, a more ardent and hostile sort of emulation. Even the French Revolution, which revealed to the eyes of affrighted Europe the abyss of envy, rancour, and ferocity which had lain hid in the bosom of French society, brought to light, at the same time, energies, which, if rightly directed, seemed to promise a new and more vigorous life to the nation. Unhappily for France, and for Europe, they were turned into the channel of external war. The burning torrents which had devastated France overflowed Europe; and whatever were the detestation felt by the wise and good for the man who employed the faculties of a whole people for his own aggrandisement, or the contempt for the people which consented to be so used, France, as a warrior and an enemy, was too able and too formidable not to be generally respected; while Englishmen of education never forgot the vast debt the civilized world owed to France, or the remarkable intelligence that lay crushed and mute under the heel of the tyrant.

With the fall of the man who had inflicted so much evil on England—so much greater and more lasting evil on France—fell, with astonishing rapidity, the exasperation of the English people. We should despair of making any Frenchman believe how little of it remained, even before the turf had grown over the graves of Waterloo. The English are not vindictive; they trouble themselves little about foreigners, and they had come out of the contest victors; they are the least suspicious people in the world, and not at all ingenious in discovering bad motives, or distorting facts; they not only let bygones be bygones, but, generally speaking, believe what you tell them, and let things be what they seem. But if there was little rancour in the heart of England at the close of the war, there was, in her head, abundance of what is perhaps a still more fertile source of misrepresentation and antipathy—ignorance. How could it be

¹ The above extracts were written in English and are printed *verbatim*.

otherwise? Never, perhaps, since the world began was there such an example of iron and successful despotism as that which put an end to all intercourse between two neighbouring countries, so advanced in all the means of communication, so interested in knowing each other's character, condition, and actions. They knew each other only in the character of exasperated combatants, inflamed by systematic misrepresentations. The French people generally, with their characteristic indifference to freedom, submitted to be blindfolded and gagged by the man who rendered them formidable and famous.¹

Subsequent events have not tended to produce a better mutual understanding. The weariness, apathy, and levity displayed by the French at the close of the ruinous military pageant which they had accepted in lieu of everything that a rational people demands from its government, were not calculated to inspire respect; and seemed to prove that, in spite of the enormous external strength France had put forth for the terror and subjugation of Europe, her internal weakness and political incapacity were as great as ever. By her friends these were regarded as the natural consequence of her long servitude, and the misdirection and exhaustion of her powers; while the fresh and vigorous burst of talent of various kinds displayed at the Restoration by the emancipated mind of France, excited in all generous and enlightened Englishmen the not unreasonable hope that faculties so brilliant and so various would at length be turned to noble and useful purposes; and that a people who had suffered so much from civil convulsions, domestic tyranny, and external wars, would submit with thankfulness to a government which promised them some security from such enormous evils, and some chance of progressive reform. Though this hope was but imperfectly fulfilled, it must be confessed that there was not much in the Revolution of 1830 to awaken the fear that the diseased restlessness which precedes and accompanies

¹ We remember hearing, from one of the few who steadily refused to bow the knee before the false gods of war and glory, a very curious and interesting description of the arrival of an English newspaper at Paris, during the darkest period of non-intercourse. It was brought thither, torn into extremely small pieces, in the boots of some traveller. The precious fragments were given to Madame Say (the wife of the honest and high-minded J. B. Say), who shut herself up in her bedroom with one or two female friends on whose secrecy and discretion she could rely, and with whose help she accomplished a task like those imposed by the fairy on Princess Finetta. They succeeded in arranging and joining together the small confused bits. 'And then,' she said, 'it was the greatest proof of regard and confidence we could give to any one, to invite him to see this precious rarity and perilous possession.'

debility had become chronic. The provocation was real, the conflict without ferocity, and the victory used with moderation; and the early years of the reign of Louis Philippe, spite of numerous symptoms of moral disorder in the lower strata of society, seemed to promise something like a perception, on the part of the people, of the functions and powers of governments, and of their impassable limits; something like the reasonable acquiescence in the inevitable conditions of civil society which characterizes *men*, and renders peace, order, and security possible. But these promises were delusive. The old diseased restlessness, the anarchical sentiments, the political unreason, reappeared under various forms, and every observant eye saw with alarm the indications of the coming paroxysm.

The paroxysm was the Revolution of 1848. Considered as a political drama—to use the favourite French word—this event was calculated immeasurably to lower France as a political society in the eyes of all thinking men. There was no adequate cause for it; no serious provocation. The evils and abuses ascribed to the government were partly attributable to the character and opinions of the nation, partly such as inhere in all governments, and in all human things; they were susceptible of reform, correction, and improvement. Granting that the king's government was in some respects bad, it was confessedly mild, and was, moreover, near its natural termination; when the country would have before it several alternatives as to the persons or the forms under which its government might be carried on. It could find no other expedient but the old one;—the overthrow of everything.

There was nothing to excuse the conduct of the public men, who, after long and terrible experience, goaded on an irritable and ignorant populace. The populace itself, the active maker of this revolution, was despicable as to numbers, character, everything. But what tended more than anything else to damage the French people in the eyes of Englishmen was, the total want of prudence, courage or firmness on the part of the middle and higher classes. The *bourgeoisie*, which had been stupidly delighted at anything that could annoy and alarm the government, was now stupidly frightened; but so far from doing anything to protect itself or the State from ruin, it remained passive and cowed. Now the thing most despicable in the eyes of Englishmen is want of energy, coolness, and determination. The French, who complain, and with great justice, of our selfish and contemptuous indifference to their present unhappy condition, should recollect, that the incidents of the Revolution of 1848, and the part played by those whose especial business it

was to defend society from the assaults of the mob, was not of a kind to conciliate the respect of an energetic and self-relying people. A people accustomed for ages to act together in all political emergencies, to see at a glance their leaders and their comrades, and to find ready to their hands the *cadre* of a self-asserting and self-defending organization, cannot be expected to understand the paralyzing difficulties of a people enfeebled by ages of centralization. A few eloquent words uttered by M. Guizot in 1853, paint with terrible truth this state of the public mind of France:—

‘Regardez autour de vous, et peut-être en vous-même; l’abattement des esprits et des cœurs est général; tant de mécomptes dans le passé! tant de ténèbres sur l’avenir. Le doute, le découragement, et cette inquiétude tantôt agitée tantôt apathique, mais toujours stérile que le doute enfante, c’est le mal de notre temps, même parmi les honnêtes gens.’

‘Il manque à notre société la paix intérieure, cette paix qui prend sa source dans la confiance que se portent mutuellement les hommes et les diverses classes d’hommes; dans la sécurité morale avec laquelle ils vivent et traitent ensemble.’

This political helplessness was mournfully evident, when the first day of the Revolution, the day of the fatal banquet, came. None, even of the best-informed Frenchmen, of whatever party, seemed to know what to expect, far less what to do. It was past midnight when M. de —, Capitaine de vaisseau, came to the door of a friend of ours; everybody but the porter was in bed, but he desired the *femme-de-chambre* to be called, and said to her, ‘Dites à madame qu’elle ne s’inquiète pas. Ce ne sera rien. Ce n’est qu’une gaminerie.’ The lady did not see him again till all was over. ‘Ah, Monsieur le Capitaine, quelle gaminerie!’ was her natural exclamation. But the kind and courteous sailor, who had shown so much consideration for the fears of a woman and a foreigner, easily justified himself from the charge of a too ready confidence. He said, ‘I followed the *émeute* from its first assembling at daybreak, till I left it to call at your door. I can affirm that repeatedly in the course of that day it might have been put down with ease.’

On the morning of the 24th the Comte de — called upon us at an early hour: he was in his uniform of National Guard, and looked pale and profoundly dejected. He said, ‘It is all over with us. You have heard the *rappel* beating ever since six o’clock. The battalion to which I belong consists of 600 men. How many do you think we assembled? Eighty. The *gamins* in the street laughed at us and said, “Ah! ce ne sont que les mains blanches.”’ It was true; they were a handful of gentlemen.

Yet it is certain that to the large majority of the industrious classes the Revolution was odious, the name of Republic, a name of horror. We shall never forget the countenance of an honest neighbour in Paris—a *laitier*—as the mob passed, bearing in triumph the wreck of the throne, and other *débris* of the plunder of the Tuileries. He stood on the pavement before his door, as we all did, looking at the fierce and exulting rabble, and speechless; at length he turned to us, with a face frozen by the thought that had then struck him, and gasped out, 'Pourvu que ce ne soit pas la République!'

Early in the morning of the 25th, passing through the Place de la Madeleine, we went into a grocer's shop, to ask what was the state of things at the corner of the Rue des Capucines. Nothing can be conceived more repulsive than the gay triumphant air with which the *épicier*, weighing his sugar for an equally complacent customer, assured him that 'Guizot' would be caught and would infallibly be hanged.¹ This man belonged to the class which looked on the destruction of the monarchy as a pleasant piece of mischief; men incapable of one serious thought of consequences; equally incapable of any measure or thought of self-defence when those consequences ensued. But we need not multiply these symptoms of the state of the public mind in France. It is now generally understood that the vast majority of the French people had no other part in the Revolution than first, to weaken the government, and secondly, to do nothing whatever to put down the tumult.

But the submissive acceptance of a government which nobody affected to approve or to respect, was inexplicable to the mass of the English people; and accordingly it led their opinions on

¹ To relieve our readers from the disgust with which they will read this expression of stupid ferocity, we must relate what occurred in the village in which M. Guizot's country-house is situated. It is near Lisieux, a large manufacturing town—democratic and dangerous; and there was good reason to expect that it would be attacked. The house, full of things of interest and value, and especially of part of M. Guizot's fine library, was left in the care of the gardener. A party of the peasants of the village immediately went to the house and offered to defend it against all assailants. The danger, as they knew, would not have been slight; a Lisieux mob was not likely to be merciful. But there is not the smallest doubt that the brave fellows would have made a determined defence. Equally noble and courageous was the conduct of the *cure* of the village. This good Catholic priest went to the house of his great Protestant neighbour, and begged that any objects of particular value might be intrusted to him. He would keep them in his sacristy or in his own house. Yet he must have known that his sacred function would be a poor protection from the sort of men who compose the mob of a manufacturing town.

their neighbours entirely astray. From that day to this they have remained so. Englishmen, accustomed to regard the French as a brave, high-spirited people, and wholly unaccustomed themselves to the terrors of anarchy, could by no means be brought to believe that such a people had tamely submitted to the domination of a low and contemptible faction, and had accepted a government they hated, without an attempt at resistance.

On the other hand, Frenchmen of education and character heard with the utmost surprise, and not without resentment, that a number of so-called 'Liberals' in England expressed great satisfaction at the overthrow of the constitutional monarchy, and warm sympathy with the revolutionary government so reluctantly accepted by France. Those who had witnessed the revolution, who knew what it overthrew, and what it substituted, who had seen the blank dismay of the people, and more especially of the peaceful and orderly of the lower classes, found with amazement on their return to England, men of the educated classes rejoicing in this disastrous overthrow of all hope of good government in France, as a triumph of liberty. It was almost impossible to make the faithful champions of free institutions in France believe that this could be the feeling of any well-wisher to their country and their cause; they regarded it (not without an appearance of reason) as a proof that the old hatred was not extinct here; and that the pretended sympathy with liberalism was only a mask for exultation in the ruin and dishonour of a rival. There was something even in the attitude of the English who flocked to Paris 'to see what was going on,' that wounded them to the quick. We remember hearing one of the most eminent political thinkers of France—now, alas! no more—animadvert with great bitterness on the behaviour of certain Englishmen in the Chamber of Deputies during the horrible scene of the 15th of May. 'They looked on at the death-throes of constitutional government in France,' said he, 'with eager and animated curiosity, as they would at a bull-fight.' And among them were members of that time-honoured representative body whose sympathies might—one would think, *must*—have been with men who had hoped to bequeath to the world another great arena of public discussion.

That there were men in England whose sympathies would be, as the French say, '*acquises*' to success, on whatever side, or men whose personal antipathies were stronger than their public affections, was to be expected; but the true patriots and enlightened men who were stricken to the dust by this outbreak of brute violence, and who saw with dismay that the reign of

brute violence was inaugurated, and probably established for an indefinite time in France, were wholly unprepared for the sentiments with which their calamities were viewed by many Englishmen; and have never been able to understand or to forgive them.

Their anticipations were but too well founded. Violence had assumed another form, and one more likely to perpetuate itself than that of the Republic. But the change, so far from rendering the state of France more intelligible to Englishmen of average ignorance, has only made it more perplexing. For have not the French universal suffrage? and did they not choose their President? and did they not vote that he should be Emperor?

If ever the day should arrive when numbers rule paramount in England, and intelligence, knowledge, experience, character, station go for nothing, Englishmen will be enabled to appreciate the blessings of universal suffrage, and the *sort* of public opinion it represents. Meanwhile those who read, and those who converse with honest, enlightened, and rational Frenchmen, know what to think, both of the ruler of France and of the consideration he enjoys. We asked a noble and consistent champion of national liberty the other day, whether Louis Napoleon was popular among the mass of the people. 'Why,' said he, 'il est leur homme. Ils l'ont fait, et ils aiment cela.' 'They don't dislike a despot,' rejoined an Englishman, 'provided he is not a gentleman, and has no title but their caprice. They regard him as an instrument for crushing and keeping down all superiorities, which are the real and constant objects of their aversion.' We do not believe that such feelings as these are at all understood by the English people in general, or that they would be regarded with sympathy if they were. We have always been convinced, that the reception given to the emperor here, which amazed and scandalized Europe, was founded on a complete misconception; and we have repeatedly maintained this to Frenchmen, who beheld, with a mixture of wonder, mortification, and contempt, the English people lavishing their acclamations on an adventurer who had risen to power by perjury.

But if we may conscientiously allege this excuse for the mass of our countrymen, we can find none for men whose high position rendered it impossible that they should be ignorant of the facts, and whom we should not have dared to suspect of sympathy with the class to whom Louis Napoleon belongs. A proud, justly proud, hereditary aristocracy, jealous of their honour—an Estate of the oldest and most stable constitutional

government in the world—was just the very last body in which we should have expected to find admirers, abettors, and associates of a revolutionary despot, the instrument and the representative of the lowest passions of the populace, repudiated by everything that is elevated or enlightened in the country he has subjugated by its aid. This remains, and will remain, a shameful puzzle to all the better part of the French nation;—the part which, in the midst of their sufferings and humiliations, looked to England for commiseration and sympathy. Men of old descent, high honour, refined habits, and enlarged culture, looked with confidence across the Channel to their peers, who, to all these gifts and advantages, joined the paramount one of living under a dignified and secure government. They saw, with amazement and bitter disappointment, many of these very men courting their perfidious oppressor. To gain the support of a man who, as we and the world knew, no oaths or obligations could bind; to conciliate the part of the French nation which ignorance, prejudice, and envy will for ever render hostile to us; we alienated the affections, and lost the respect, of the portion in whom knowledge had in part vanquished antipathy; whose sympathies and aspirations were all with constitutional government—and consequently with England, its cradle and its mighty nurse; and who, if ever France is to revive, and to rise out of the abyss into which anarchical opinions have plunged her, must be her saviours and her chiefs.

Other hope for her there is none; and if, in spite of her deep abjection, we still continue to hope, it is because we see with admiration and respect that, in spite of all discouragements, with the heel of the oppressor on their necks, the representatives of the great intelligence of France go on to labour for her honour and instruction, and to produce works worthy of her name. We are struck with astonishment when we see the number of excellent books that continue to issue from the French press, and to maintain its reputation, even in the midst of the filth and froth by which it is defiled and degraded.

We have spoken plainly, too plainly perhaps, of the faults in the French character which appear to us to render so doubtful the establishment of stable institutions in France. While doing so, we have felt as if we were almost false to France, and to our own sentiments, in enlarging on her defects. How much could we say of the virtues, the merits, the gifts, and the graces of her sons and daughters! In how many things have we seen and acknowledged their superiority! In how many, longed to commend them to the admiration of our countrymen! Let us at least do homage to the noble qualities which political ad-

versity has brought to light. In what other country in Europe would be found an equal number of men lying under every conceivable inducement to return to political life, whom nothing has been able to tempt to the smallest concession? Many of the the men who have played a great political part in France are very far from being born to the high independent position enjoyed by most of our statesmen; and in keeping aloof from the imperial government, they at once exclude themselves and their families from all the things most coveted by men. Many of them have the practice and the passion of public life, and must feel bitter and disinterested regret at being shut out from the service of their country; many see their sons growing up without a career or an incentive to laudable ambition; yet which of the great names that illustrated, by speech or pen, the great conflicts of the constitutional monarchy, is found to have transferred his allegiance and his advocacy to the cause of despotism or the encouragement of anarchy? We find them all in dignified retirement, pursuing with unabated ardour their researches into everything that can be honourable or useful to France—lending themselves to no political plots, and strangers to the intrigues and corruptions of an impure court. These men are, to all who know what France really contains, and who can appreciate political probity, and virtuous scorn of ill-gotten power, *the true France*—the France which has done so much for the instruction, the refinement, and the pleasure of mankind.

It is impossible to express to what a degree these honourable men seem to us deserving of reverential pity. Members of a society which has no sympathy with them, and which it is impossible they should esteem, crushed under the double weight of a military despotism and an envious democracy, even the love of country becomes a source of mortification, grief, and fear. Even the comfort of striving to emancipate and raise France is denied them, when the very idea of change inspires terror; and safety and honour can only be reached through a dark and stormy sea on which no one would be justified in embarking.

Never, we are convinced, were we in less favour, certainly not in lower estimation, with the French, and with the whole of Europe than during the theatrical display of friendship in 1854 and 1855. As to favour, let us once for all persuade ourselves of one thing. The mass of the French nation are incapable of *liking* a people who have any claims to equality with them—claims which they never will allow, and which are the more distasteful to them the higher and the better founded they are. Between two nations so nearly matched, and so widely dif-

ferent; each full of self-esteem and of intolerant prejudice; each naturally incapable of understanding the other, and profoundly ignorant of the feelings and motives which lie at the root of social existence, there can never be much liking. Few nations are capable of recognising two standards or two sorts of excellence in any line; the French, from natural vanity, and long habit of predominating in Europe, peculiarly so. So much for taste and sympathy. Remains, the respect which certain qualities and certain lines of conduct will always extort from men of high spirit, and quick appreciation of the great and the noble. *This* we might, if we would, command. There are in the English character elements singularly adapted to win the respect of unprejudiced Frenchmen, who are able to perceive wherein France is defective, and wherein other nations excel. There are qualities in which the better informed and more judicious among them were always willing to admit our superiority, and upon which they placed a respectful reliance. Our gravity, sobriety, and moderation; our persevering attachment to freedom; our firm and consistent preference of good institutions to the perilous glories or the gaudy trappings of despotic government; our determination not to risk our internal franchises and securities for the doubtful advantages of external conquest;—these composed an ideal before which every reflecting Frenchman bowed with respect. Every reflecting Frenchman now asks what is become of this ideal?—why we are eagerly throwing off our noblest characteristics and our best traditions?—what is become of our sympathy with civil and religious freedom?—how it is that a government begun in perfidy, continued by confiscation and violence, unable to buy or to command the services or the countenance of any of its own most distinguished or most respectable subjects, compelled to extinguish the press, to stifle every germ of constitutional government, became the object of the daily applause of the English—and not only of the mass, ignorant of all that passes out of England, but of members of the legislature! members of that branch of the legislature whose consideration and whose very existence depend on the maintenance of stable institutions and of hereditary rights! whose function it is to act as barriers against despotic power and restless innovation! How is it that the English, who used to talk with proud contempt of French frivolity and *persiflage*, are now content to see their great deliberative assembly converted into an arena for the exhibition of bad jokes and vulgar banter? How is it that the English people, who used to pride themselves on solid good sense and decent earnestness, have permitted their public

men to compromise or blemish the great renown, the grave authority of England? to lower us, as we are most unquestionably lowered, in the eyes of all Europe? Europe, which pardoned us our want of amiable and brilliant qualities, in consideration of the gravity, the veracity, the honour, the trustworthy patriotism which commanded her respect,—what does she think now? It is impossible to take up a book or a newspaper, to hear a conversation in any company on the continent without having the admission wrung from one that the last ten years have witnessed a mortifying decline in the prestige of England.

France saw with just resentment the English people become the servile flatterers of a government which is regarded by every honourable and high-minded man in France as a standing insult to the intelligence and dignity of his country. While even the absolute power wielded by Louis Napoleon has not enabled him to attach to his person or his court a single great or eminent name; while everything that is respected and respectable kept entirely aloof, we, for Englishmen, prostrated ourselves before a foreign despotism which we should not for a single moment endure at home. All this is utterly unintelligible to thinking Frenchmen; and they can see no other solution of so strange a problem than one the most insulting and galling to them;—the English think good enough for us a government they would not tolerate for a day.

The following extract from a letter written at the beginning of the Russian war by the same honourable man whose opinions of France we have already quoted, expresses some of the opinions and feelings which the demonstrations of that time were calculated to produce in the minds of Frenchmen:—

‘I have a clear view of the present state of English minds. England is obliged to hold by the French alliance, and to conciliate, as much as possible, her natural dislike with her political necessities. The English allege the wickedness of the *nation*, with whom they have nothing more to do, as an excuse for the character of the *government*, upon which alone everything depends. They do not wish to hear anything against the power, the support of which they want in the threatening contest. But there is a sort of easy satisfaction which English morality enjoys,—perhaps a little too much—I mean, the pleasure of saying that the French are perfectly well off in their present state, and that no other would suit them better.’

Why could we not be content to be the honest ally of France, without acting a part which, in the eyes of all sensible Frenchmen, must appear a farce ludicrous and contemptible or the expression of a stolid and complacent selfishness? Why not keep ourselves within the prudent reserve which charac-

terizes the great mass of the French middle classes, who acquiesce in what they feel to be a necessity, but who affect no attachment to their ruler?

Nor was this all. Not satisfied with adoring the absolute sovereign of France, the English press was never tired of expatiating on the immense superiority of the French army. In all the terrible reports of correspondents from the Crimea, every defect in the English camp was contrasted with the corresponding merit in the French. We learned (oh wonder and novelty!) that we were not a military nation; that our soldiers could not cook, nor turn their hands to everything. As if this national difference had anything to do with one army or the other, and did not pervade the whole of society in the two countries! Let the gentlemen who found our poor soldiers so inferior to their allies, request their valet, or their groom, or, let us say, their clerk, or their errand-boy, to cook them a *potage*, or compound them a salad, even with Leadenhall and Covent Garden at their backs, and see what sort of eyes those excellent functionaries would make. Let us once for all understand that we are people who can do *one thing—well—*nay, as near as may be, perfectly. But when it comes to shifts and hand-turns, and making something out of nothing, we are utterly at a stand. The division of labour, the taste for order and regularity, the contempt for ill-done and half-done work, and a certain contentment in monotony, have conspired to produce this sort of character, which is completely national, and just as conspicuous in our housemaids as in our soldiers. No rational man would have been surprised at finding it, and certainly would not have held it up as a peculiar deficiency in our troops. It was, however, natural enough that the French should be struck with it, and that, *to them*, our soldiers should appear like helpless children. ‘They want to have everything done for them,’ was their common remark.

This boundless admiration of them, and abasement of ourselves, was not the way to secure the respect nor the confidence of the French. Calmness, dignity, reserve, strict honour and adherence to promises, are the qualities they look for from the English. They do not like us a bit the more, and they respect us much the less, for all the silly enthusiasm and abject flattery we lavished upon them. They are not even grateful; for the most preposterous compliments you can pay them will never come up to their own estimate of their superiority; and in the indefatigable endeavours of the press to depreciate everything English and to exalt everything French, they saw nothing but the simplest justice, and a very fitting recognition that they are,

as the President of the Cour Royale at Angers said, 'plus que jamais à la tête de la civilisation et des nations.' They did not understand that these things were written to annoy Lord X.; or to plague Mr. Z.; or to turn out Messrs. X., Y., and Z.; or to worry Lord Raglan, because he had been appointed by those gentlemen. They do not believe it when they are told. No, it was the involuntary, sincere homage of reluctant witnesses. The war, which had been at first notoriously unpopular in France, grew into favour with the people whose vanity was stimulated, and whose dormant love of military glory warmed into new life by our incessant applauses.

We heard Frenchmen of sense, generous admirers of England, who did ample justice to the bravery of our soldiers and the dauntless self-devotion of our officers, express their surprise at the insane and suicidal desire which seemed to have seized us to vie with France as a military nation. They repeated, 'What are you to do without a conscription; without any solicitude during peace for the maintenance of your army; nay, with a people always trying to shake off part of the burthen of it, and with a tone of public opinion utterly opposed to military ascendancy?' 'Is it not your continued and your very just boast, that one sees no soldiers in England? How much and how long have other nations envied you that singular privilege! But who would have thought that you would expect in a moment to find yourselves on a military equality with a people who have ever been ready to barter away all their liberties for glory? Who would have thought that the powers wielded by such a government as ours would be held up to Englishmen in favourable contrast to the inconveniences and shortcomings inseparable from the divided and impeded action of a government which is subjected to so many restraints, and leaves so much to individual effort? God grant that in your military ardour you do not permit or even demand the conscription!'

We cannot conclude without assuring our readers that none of the foregoing reflections have been suggested by the events of the last few weeks: they are the result of long observation of France, and intercourse with all classes of its inhabitants. It is true that even while we have been putting together these scattered thoughts, the clouds which lowered in the horizon have gathered swiftly around us. They have cast their shadow over our pages, and have given them a deeper and graver tinge than we intended. Public opinion, too, has undergone a considerable change; and those whose moral sense was little offended by the crimes of a useful ally (so long as they were confined to the people he had sworn to protect), are filled with righteous indignation at the bare suspicion that he may extend to us a portion

of the duplicity and perfidy which he has bestowed so largely upon his own subjects.

Nothing, however, that has occurred has produced the slightest change in our opinion of France or of its ruler. We have seen the French people accept two different forms of tyranny, both of which they hated and despised. We are now prepared to see them, at the inspiration and under the conduct of the very man who has betrayed and enslaved them, display matchless skill and courage in bringing destruction on other nations. The consideration, that they may themselves be buried under the ruins they make, will, we fear, hardly arrest their course. Hitherto no penalty has ever seemed to them too great to pay for the savage excitements of war, and the satisfaction of trampling on others. This was the opinion, early formed and steadily acted on by the soldier of fortune under whose sway they acquired the highest military renown, and lost whatever remnant of political courage and fortitude, whatever care for institutions, whatever faith in principles, the revolution had left them.¹ But a few weeks ago, every letter from France, whatever were the party of the writer, contained the same assurances.² The war was unpopular, dreaded, 'execrated.' Yet although the well-informed and thoughtful still speak of it as 'a war for which there is no provocation, no excuse, and no inclination;' though they still see in the dark future a train of calamities resulting from it, the popular feeling has, we are assured, undergone a great change, and the inconstant and inflammable mind of France is fast getting into that state of 'blood-drunkness' which appears to be its only condition of strength.

If, however, the present state of things has little affected our estimate of the French people and their ruler, it has confirmed our opinion of the conduct of England since the Revolution of 1848. We have already urged, for the mass of our countrymen, the apology of ignorance. They did not know, and they were reluctant to believe, the real character of the

¹ In 1797, General Bonaparte, walking in the gardens of the castle of Montebello with M. Miot and M. de Melzi, said of the French, 'Il leur faut de la gloire, les satisfactions de la vanité; mais, de la liberté! . . . ils n'y entendent rien. Voyez l'armée, les victoires que nous venons de remporter ont déjà rendu le soldat français à son véritable caractère. Je suis tout pour lui.'

² 'L'Europe entière, la France comprise, sauf quelques écervelés et quelques malheureux, a jugé que cette guerre était abominable, sans motifs. . . . Dans les plus hautes sphères, la désapprobation est énergique, comme dans le reste du pays. Mais voyez la déplorable situation où nous sommes! On va risquer nos plus chers intérêts, et notre meilleur sang va couler, sans qu'on ait encore daigné nous en dire le motif.'—*Extract from a letter written in February, 1859.*

imperial government. They were under the illusion, that the popular basis on which it rests, or appears to rest, afforded security to the rights and liberties of the people. Accustomed as they are to boundless publicity and the freest criticism of the acts of government, it was impossible for them to conceive a state of things in which the press dares not even mention notorious facts. Hence the reports of the deportation of hundreds of men without the shadow of a trial, and of other monstrous acts of tyranny, have been received with incredulity, and treated as party calumnies or the inventions of disappointed ambition.

Other appearances have contributed to perplex their judgment. We may especially mention the readiness, or rather eagerness, with which the loans, thrown open to the humblest means, have been raised. Few people, indeed, in this country are aware at what price this appearance of confidence and of affluence has been bought. A gentleman who had occasion to go frequently to Paris by the railroad (a distance of about thirty miles) told us that he was perfectly astounded at the conversations he overheard between his peasant fellow-travellers. 'Already,' he said, (and this was almost immediately after the first popular *Emprunt*) 'they talk like old stock-jobbers. They are familiar with the terms and tricks of the trade, and show the proverbial "*ruse*" of the French peasant, combined with the passion of the habitual gamester. They are continually running up to Paris to see how things go at the Bourse. A year or two ago these men would have talked only of their crops or their cattle.' A very intelligent French lady, speaking on the same subject, said, 'C'est du poison qu'il nous donne.' She went on to describe the profound demoralization consequent on this scheme for inoculating a whole people with the passion for gambling in the funds; and the effect of it on a small but quiet and thriving town. Up to the time of the *Emprunt*, the population was employed either in agriculture or in a small manufacture, which furnished a quiet and decent maintenance to many families. There were in the whole town two men who had money in the funds; the rest invested their savings in land or in the trade of the place. Now, there is hardly an individual who is not a fundholder. They live in a state of constant excitement, and not only cease to regard the dishonest practices of the Bourse with disapprobation, but study, and very successfully, to learn them. 'Of all the evils he has brought upon us, this,' said she, 'is the worst!'

But however anxious we may be to defend the mass of our countrymen from the charge of approving what is most odious to them, and regarding with selfish indifference the wrongs done to others, we confess that we have nothing to oppose to the

general opinion of Europe respecting the sentiments and the conduct of persons to whom the real state of France could not be unknown. We are making no very lofty pretensions, when we say that a little more magnanimity towards the vanquished, and a little more caution towards the victor might have been reasonably looked for. In the ordinary transactions of life, we measure out our confidence in some degree according to the known conduct of those with whom we have to deal. Yet where the honour and safety of England, the cause of justice and humanity, respect for the sanctity of oaths and for public morality were at stake, the most ordinary dictates of prudence and honour were disregarded; and we hastened to pay obsequious and fervent homage to a power acquired, as we knew, by treachery and violence. It was in vain that some Englishmen, to whom triumphant crime is still crime, protested. In vain that warning voices incessantly came from across the Channel. In vain, that the honourable and enlightened minority whom the masses and their chosen chief hold prostrate, constantly exhorted us to beware of one, the worth of whose protestations and oaths they knew so well. Either from vanity and levity, from cynical indifference to truth and honesty, or from that proneness to sycophancy of the successful which commonly accompanies the desire to humiliate the fallen, men whose duty it is to guide public opinion, helped to betray their more ignorant countrymen into a prodigal and discreditable waste of approbation and confidence on one whom no honest man could approve, and no prudent man trust. National conceit accepted the absurd notion that the ruler of France had a predilection for England; knew her, too well, and respected her too much, ever to venture on any act of hostility to her. Even all that was done at the time of the '*Attentat*' to direct the hatred and anger of the French army and people against this country did not open our eyes; we refused to see the hand that secretly prompted, and openly accepted the famous addresses of the colonels.¹ It is generally affirmed on the Continent that had England maintained a prudent and dignified reserve, the audacious projects

¹ We heard the following incident from a near relation of one of the two actors in the scene.

A young captain of one of the cavalry '*régiments de fils de famille*,' (which answer to our 'crack regiments' of the same arm,) stationed in the south of France, was breakfasting with his colonel, when the latter opened the '*Moniteur*.' In a few minutes he threw it down with a violent exclamation. He had just read in it a letter, not one syllable of which he had ever seen before, signed with his own name, as Colonel of the — Regt. of ————. It contained one of the most violent denunciations of England.

which have long floated before the mind of the Emperor would never have been put in execution. These projects, it is said, have been matured by the warmth of English applause and sympathy.

This strange fit of enthusiasm for a despot, in a people which has always professed to hate despotism, is, however, nearly over, and must die a natural death ere long. Meantime it is fortunate for mankind that we are now put in possession of data upon which to found a calm and complete judgment of the political morality of the founder and prototype of the Bonapartean dynasty. In the Correspondence of Napoleon with his brother Joseph, and the Memoirs of Count Miot de Mérito, the '*Idées Napoléoniennes*,' are fully developed and practically illustrated. We see the utter contempt for mankind; for human happiness and dignity; for truth, justice, and humanity; for sound knowledge and noble thought, which characterized the first Napoleon, and which are the inheritance and the guide of his descendants. The display of these qualities during the occupation of Italy forms a curious subject of contemplation at this moment.

But it is France with which we have to do. We cannot better conclude our remarks on her present condition than in the words of M. de Mérito, written in 1804. It has a strange and melancholy application to the events and the persons of our own days.

'Voilà donc l'issue de cette révolution commencée par un élan presque universel de patriotisme et d'amour de la liberté. Quoi, tant de sang versé sur les champs de bataille et sur les échafauds, tant de fortunes détruites, tant de sacrifices de tout ce que l'homme a de plus cher, n'auront abouti qu'à nous faire changer de maîtres, qu'à substituer une famille inconnue il y a dix ans, et qui, au moment où commença la révolution, était à peine française, à la famille qui régnait depuis huit siècles en France! Notre condition, est-elle donc si misérable que nous n'ayons d'autre asile que le despotisme? Que nous soyons obligés pour éloigner les maux qui nous menacent aujourd'hui de tout accorder aux Bonapartes sans rien leur demander? De les élever sur le plus beau trône de l'Europe, de leur donner en héritage la gloire de commander à l'une des premières nations du monde, sans pouvoir leur imposer la plus légère condition, sans qu'aucun contrat les engage, sans qu'aucune institution nouvelle remplace au moins celles qui servaient quelquefois de digue aux caprices de nos anciens maîtres? Car ce n'est pas dans un sénat avili, dans un conseil d'état amovible et sans consistance, dans un corps législatif muet, dans un tribunal tremblant et mendiant quelques places, dans une magistrature sans considération qu'il faut chercher un contrepoids à ce pouvoir immense confié à un seul homme. Et ce pas, quelque pénible qu'il soit, il faut le faire, sous peine d'être livrés demain à des ennemis plus redoutables encore!'

¹ '*Mémoires*,' &c., vol. ii. p. 169.

THE DRAMA OF THE DAY.

Thirty-five Years of a Dramatic Author's Life. By Edward Fitzball, Esq. 2 vols. London: 1859.

ALTHOUGH the merits of 'Thirty-five Years of a Dramatic Author's Life' are not great, the book affords us a fair occasion for some remarks on the present condition and probable prospects of the English stage. So little, indeed, beyond the newspaper summaries of new plays is now written on these subjects, that we owe some thanks to Mr. Fitzball for thus chronicling his own fortunes and experiences. The author of considerably more than one hundred dramas—some of which were very successful at the moment, and a few of which are still occasionally performed—has some claim to be admitted as evidence in the matter of theatrical entertainments. Indeed, we hardly know where to look for a better index of the theatrical productions which during a generation found favour in the eyes of the play-going world. Nor if our comments on its subject-matter should tempt our readers to look into Mr. Fitzball's volumes, will they have a right to complain of lack of amusement. He tells his story—sometimes a laughable, sometimes a painful one—honestly and simply, and we have met with many books of far higher pretensions that have impressed us much less favourably than these towards their authors.

Mr. Fitzball has a childlike faith in the illusions of the stage, and writes of them as if they were as sober and substantial verities as a cattle-market or a Quaker's meeting. The best comparison at a theatre for all persons who have passed the age of belief, and entered upon that of doubt, is a novice in such matters, more especially if the novice be a school-boy or a girl. Then on the features of the uncritical spectator are reflected as in a mirror, the emotions of wonder, sympathy, or mirth, which it is the privilege of acting to awaken, but which so soon vanishes with use and repetition. Time seems, however, to have dealt more leniently with our author in this respect, and he writes with the profound earnestness of a lad in his teens of the magic wonders effected by a few yards of painted canvas, pulleys, ropes, gauges, and gaslight. Nor even the prosaic reverse of the scene affects this man of much faith. Amid rough boards, unpainted canvas, dust, dirt, and confusion, he stands unmoved and unperverted, and writes pathetically of the charms of rural festivals amid the hubbub of the Strand, and of

the terrors of the ocean in the heart of Drury Lane. The child, in his case, has not been the father of the man, so much as the father of a series of children, all willing to be pleased, all overflowing with marvel, faith, and sympathy. It is this which makes him so bad a critic, and so incomparable a chronicler. His guilelessness is almost infectious. After reading his volumes, we are tempted to ask ourselves which is the reality—the world or the stage? May it not be, after all, the fact that the ‘Flying Dutchman’ is as authentic a personage as the Lord Chancellor, and the fable of ‘Azaël’ as real as an act of parliament? Let our readers judge for themselves of the author’s *pleni-fidianism*, as Sir Thomas Browne calls his own exuberance of belief. ‘The very reviewers who had abused our illegitimacy, turned round and abused our legitimacy still more. So like the man and his ass, if a manager attempt to please everybody, he will please nobody. The bugbear about the legitimate drama is a piece of ignorant cant. Everything dramatic, that is moral, interesting, and amusing to the public, is the legitimate drama, whether it be illuminated with blue fire, or in one act, or in twenty. What did Knowles say to me once on this very subject? I was rehearsing my serio-ballet of “Hans of Iceland,” when I saw Knowles standing at the P.S. lost in contemplating the scene, and riveted as it were to the interest of the action going on: for, understand, there was not a word spoken. I met Knowles the next morning in Cranbourne Alley, when I inquired what he had found to interest him so in our rehearsal. “Everything,” was his reply—“the very spirit of the drama—action that speaks and appeals to the heart, as forcibly, if not more so, than the finest speech.” Then he was pleased to pay me a very great compliment, which, coming from so great a man, I may be justified in speaking of, especially since it leads to a new conclusion.

“You are very indulgent, and can afford to be so,” was my reply, “to a mere writer of melodrama.”

“Melodrama,” reiterated the poet, “and pray, what is *Macbeth* but melodrama? and *Richard the Third*, and Shakspeare’s plays in general, if you come to that? Melodrama.”

It were impertinent to inquire which of these dramatic brothers went his way the more blessed, he that gave or he that took this compliment.

Non canimus surdis: we shall commence our survey of the English drama at the present moment by taking for granted that some one or other section of the public feels an interest in the subject. It will be an evil augury for the intellectual condition of an age when the theatre and its literature shall be

quite disregarded. There may be antagonist forces which lessen at times the attractions of the stage, or qualities in the drama itself which bring it into collision with graver interests. But these are transitory drawbacks which an improved condition of the entertainment afforded by the theatre may neutralize or remove. A total indifference to it, however, by a civilized people would imply either a voluntary rejection of a free and natural expression of their thoughts and feelings or a decline of their imaginative force. When the sources of Athenian tragedy were dried up, the literature of Athens was barren also, its philosophy an echo, its religion a dead form, and its liberties a name. And when even the feebler drama of Rome was supplanted by the extravagance of pantomime, or the savage spectacles of the amphitheatre, there was no longer an assembly of the people, or even a show of freedom in the senate.

There has doubtless been for England a greater dramatic age than the present, an age when nearly all untheological literature centred in the stage. There have been greater actors than any now on the boards, because the prizes of the art were more solid and attractive. The bar, the senate, and fashion alike looked to the theatre for their models of elocution and demeanour; and Betterton, Wilks, and Garrick divided public interest with Bolingbroke, Mansfield, and Chatham. In those days to be among the foremost actors was also to be among the foremost persons of the time. But that the tokens of serious or incurable decay are written on the brow of present theatrical literature or performance we deny. We do not measure ourselves with the Elizabethan or Caroline era, for now there are many avenues, which did not then exist, through which the intellectual energy of the English nation displays itself. If we have not more serious business in hand than the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries had, we have an infinitely greater variety of social and intellectual pleasures. Literary and scientific institutions divert thousands from the theatre; the cultivation of music, the facilities for reading, the more intellectual tone of modern society are not in its favour; and thousands who would reject the long prayers and sermons of the Puritans still retain their aversion to the stage. When Samuel Pepys was jotting down his 'Diurnal,' it was as usual to go twice or thrice in the week to the playhouse as to go daily upon 'Change or to the Mall. Cabinet ministers went thither to see and to be seen. Country gentlemen would as soon have neglected Westminster Abbey, or the lions in the Tower, as Covent Garden or Goodman's Fields. To see Betterton or Nell Gwynne was as essential to one desirous of edifying his bucolic neighbours, as it was afterwards to hear Dr. Sacheverell

preach. To leave Garrick unvisited, would have been an offence as heinous as to refuse a third bottle, or to appear at Ranelagh without laced ruffles, wig, and sword. It is neither possible nor desirable that such circumstances should recur ; and consequently dramatic entertainments can never again engross the interests of the nation. It is no longer part of a cabinet minister's duty to appear in a side-box, nor expedient for the leader of the Opposition to applaud patriotic sentiments on the stage. Country gentlemen may return to their seats in Loamshire with a clear conscience, even if they have preferred hearing Professor Faraday lecture to seeing Mr. Kean in Henry V.; and an evening passed in the library of the Athenæum may be as pleasant and profitable as if it had been spent in the stalls of the Haymarket Theatre. For the amusement of the stage we have compensations unimagined by our sires. But subsidence into a secondary position is a very different matter from the actual decrepitude and decay of the drama.

So far is it from exhibiting such symptoms, that, in comparison with some earlier epochs, we may pronounce the drama to have acquired of late new vigour, and to have put forth many new and hopeful branches. For, in the first place, as regards its literature, let any one compare, with due allowance for the caprices of fashion, Bell's or Inchbald's collections of the acted drama of the last century with those of Lacy or Cumberland. We can often comprehend what made our ancestors laugh at the theatre, for Mr. Bull, though our neighbours do not relish his humour and still fancy that he hangs himself in November, has always had in his composition a good stock of hearty mirth from the days of fat Jack to those of Bob Acres. But it is much less easy to understand what formerly made him weep. Is it our fault that we generally yawn where he melted? or was the sacred source of tears in him a very shallow pool, lying near the surface, and stirred by light breezes? Has the iron age come upon us, or were beef and ale more nutritive to the emotions than the more delicate diet of this tearless generation? Be this as it may, we doubt whether now-a-days 'The Distrest Mother' would occasion any distress even to a neophyte in the boxes, or 'The Orphan' awaken any other sensation in us than that of Christopher Sly, 'A very excellent piece of work, madam lady, would it were done!' Few even of the best five-act comedies of the last century are now endurable until they are cut down to three acts; and as for the second and third-rate comedies, we should as soon expect people to read at a sitting 'Cœlebs in search of a Wife,' or Hayley's 'Young Widow,' as to await 'the tag' of any of them. We do not need to retrench the 'School

for Scandal,' or the 'Beaux Stratagem.' These classical works will always command attention whenever they are even tolerably acted; nor, were they not deformed by indecency, should we apply the pruning-knife to many of Farquhar's or Vanbrugh's plays. But we doubt whether the best company in London could now render the 'West Indian' palatable; and the other plays of 'the Terence of England, the mender of hearts,' would act on pit and boxes like poppy or mandragora. Mr. Phelps, indeed, in his last season revived Cumberland's 'Wheel of Fortune,' but the interest it excited, for a few nights, was not for the play, but for the actor; it was Penruddock, not General Tempest, or Charles Woodville, or the feeble humour and strong sentimentality of the piece that was attractive. Yet plays such as these, no less than the master-works of Sheridan and Congreve, delighted our more patient fathers, who, though they beat the watch, and drank and swore as terribly as our armies in Flanders, could put up with a good deal of sound morality on the stage, and liked to hear the virtues, which they did not always practise, commended with good emphasis and discretion. If we have not reformed altogether, we have made great advances towards rendering our theatrical entertainments more in accordance with nature and common sense. We no longer make the gentlemen and ladies of the scene 'as they ought to be, not as they are.' We do not put sermons into the mouth of gouty admirals, nor expect young Mirabel to conclude with a lecture on the duty of constancy. Our sires thought and felt otherwise; and we do not doubt their sincerity: they believed when they said that 'the stage was an auxiliary to the pulpit;' and they consistently expected Rover and Ranger to compound for their departure from virtue by hearty commendations of it. For our own part, we are persuaded that Mr. Tom Taylor's 'Still Waters run Deep,' or his 'King's Rival,' contains more genuine dramatic merit than two-thirds of the plays of the eighteenth century.

The comparison is less easy between the tragedies of the last and the present century. 'D'abord,' we might almost say with the *préfet* excusing himself for not firing a salute in honour of the great Henry of Navarre, 'd'abord nous n'avons ni poudre ni canons.' A modern tragedy is a very rare production, at least of home growth, and not 'neat as imported.' Yet we have enough of them for the purpose of contrast. Let us compare, then, with the tragic dramas of the last century the plays which Mr. Justice Talfourd, Mr. Sheridan Knowles, Mr. Marston, or Mr. White composed principally for the great tragedian who then adorned and ennobled the stage. Put Home's 'Douglas' into the scale with 'Virginius' or 'Ion;' let the 'Patrician's Daugh-

ter' be weighed against Jephson's 'Law of Lombardy,' which Horace Walpole professed to rate so highly, or 'The King of the Commons' against Glover's 'Agis,' on which Garrick in an evil hour for his reputation, and, for what he loved as well, his money, looked with an eye of such favour, that he directed 'Twelfth Night' to be played on the off-nights of the week, as a kind of ballast for (as he supposed) an empty vessel. Will the elder or the recent dramas kick the beam? We need not be curious to answer in this matter; and to the dissentient reader we recommend the perusal of them all, wishing him, meanwhile, as regards one-half of his task as much patience as he will need. Nay, that the last century may have every chance and the present one every disadvantage from the comparison, we will throw into the scale all Young's, Thomson's, and Cumberland's tragedies, and not entertain a doubt of the verdict. On these grounds we deny that the literature of the theatres has declined, and pass on to the theatres themselves. At every stage of our argument we expect to be confronted by some member of the Croaker family, that ancient house who, from the days of Micaiah the son of Imlah, have prophesied not good but evil, and who boded as dismally in Shakspeare's day, and will continue to bode so long as theatres exist. Their auguries, indeed, are not confined to 'res ludicra;' they may be heard at the Royal Academy, in the Houses of Parliament, on Change and at church, in colleges and in camps. Everything *they* see is very bad. *Their* world is the opposite of 'Candide's.' But the stage they have taken under their special protection. It is a grave omission from 'The Miseries of Human Life' that there is no mention made in its pages of the old playgoer.

Unwelcome as frost to flowers, as the east wind, *pace* Mr. Kingsley, at all seasons, as another arrow in his quiver to a slenderly-paid curate, is the old play-goer to all persons frequenting theatres for any better purpose than mortification and repentance. It will be no fault of his if you do not feel that you are wasting your time and money. For you, under his benumbing touch, pleasure, like Astræa, has fled the earth. He will assure you that the art of acting died out with Mr. A. or Mrs. B., who went to their reward about the date of your own birth; that there has been no spectacle seen on the stage comparable to the triumphal procession in 'Coriolanus' as devised by John Kemble; that owls dwell and satyrs dance on the boards where in *his* days a reasonable service was offered to the genius of Shakspeare. The risk is considerably worse if this Nestor happen to possess, or to fancy that he possesses, a talent for imitating the voice and manner of the actors whom he extols. Then your

doom is sealed, and the prophecy against Horace refulfilled in your person—

‘Hunc neque dira venena, nec hosticus auferet ensis
Nec laterum dolor, aut tussis, nec tarda podagra :
Garrulus hunc quando consumet cunque.’

‘Peace to all such,’ but at least let them allow others peace also. Meanwhile we desire no more convincing refutation of the fallacies implied in the reminiscences of the old play-goer than the present aspect of so many of the metropolitan theatres six nights in the week, and during the greater number of weeks in the year. Is the ancient spirit dead at the Princess’s Theatre, at the Adelphi, at the Haymarket, or Sadler’s Wells? Do the audiences at the Olympic or the Strand look like persons condemned to a penal sentence, ‘doomed to be dull, and ordered to be bored?’ The old play-goer hates us young people; but neither in the boxes or stalls of those houses are there any tokens that youth hates theatrical entertainments, though perhaps the decorum of modern manners restrains them from exhibiting their feelings quite so boisterously as their grandfathers are said to have done before them. Perhaps we may yet further illustrate the vitality of theatrical tastes, even in their degenerate days, as they are called, by a short survey of the performances at a few of the principal London theatres in the year 1859. Within the memories of many gentlemen who do not even now write themselves old, it was easier to meet with a mermaid, a satyr, a calf with two heads or even four, or with a boy suckled by wolves, than with a tolerably probable drama in the suburban districts of the capital. The stock pieces there exhibited were as extravagant as Marlowe’s ‘Tamburlaine,’ or Kyd’s ‘Spanish Tragedy,’ without possessing a tithe of their earnest passion or poetry. In all senses of the word the drama represented at old Sadler’s Wells or the Coburg was ‘illegitimate.’ The serious plays were hideous as the Newgate Calendar, the farces nearly as gross as Mrs. Behn’s or Mrs. Manley’s novels. The former of these houses has, under the present management, become one of the chief temples of the national drama. To any having a sincere interest in the well-being of the stage as a natural branch of art, as a lawful auxiliary of good morals and good manners, a Sadler’s Wells audience is in itself worth observation. We who write ourselves old play-goers confess to a particular respect for the population of its capacious pit and galleries. Such audiences used to sit in profound and sympathizing attention in the Bath, Norwich, and York Theatres, when Diamond, Brunton, and Tate Wilkinson were their respective managers. Not many wise or many learned

folk assisted at those representations, yet they brought with them—what for true enjoyment of the drama are qualities beyond wisdom or learning—fancies not preoccupied, feelings unblunted by the rubbish of railway libraries, and an earnest faith in the pathos or humours of the scene. Such audiences also, we imagine, greeted Shakspeare's plays, when warm from the brain, and entered heartily into Webster's 'preternatural horrors,' Ben Jonson's artful plots, and the poetical luxuriance of the Dioscuri of the Caroline drama, Beaumont and Fletcher. Mr. Phelps must, we think, survey his gods and groundlings with no common satisfaction. They are in great measure the work of his own hands. He has been the missionary of Shakspeare for so many years, that he has converted the heathens from melodrama and pantomime into devout worshippers of true comedy and tragedy. Joseph Grimaldi would have deemed the performance of 'Hamlet,' 'Macbeth,' or 'The School for Scandal,' at this theatre, a transformation at the least as extraordinary as any of his own unrivalled changes of condition in pantomimic life; nor would he have mourned the change, for though he customarily wore motley, 'old Joe' was a genuine actor, and meant for better things than clowns or bravos.

The builders of the little Princess's Theatre projected, when they laid its foundations, a commodious abode for the lighter kinds of the lyrical and general drama; and would have considered as more insane than Cassandra the seer who should have then foretold that it would one day become the foremost temple of Shakspeare himself in the nineteenth century. In a few weeks from the time of these sheets going to press, Mr. Charles Kean's nine years of management will have come to an end at this theatre; and though we trust that he may be spared to the stage itself for at least an equal period of years, we shall probably not again have the benefit of his zeal, talents, and taste in the production of the highest forms of the national drama. His revivals of Shakspeare form an epoch in the history of the stage which the present time will not readily forget, and posterity perhaps will not willingly let die. 'Multa pars vitabit Libitinam.'

Mr. Kean, from the very outset of his career, encountered unusual difficulties, at first as an actor, afterwards as a manager. In the one case he inherited a great name; in the other, he succeeded to great achievements. But his name was not in his favour, because the public expected him to reign at once in his father's stead; and after Mr. Macready's representations of the Shaksperian drama their appetite had been sharpened, and their eyes rendered acute and critical in all that regarded the ad-

juncts of the scene. Again, the Princess's Theatre, in comparison with Covent Garden, afforded few facilities for the display of scenery or the development of groups. There was little room for the complicate evolutions of such masses of men as were brought, or rather packed together, in 'Sardanapalus,' 'King John,' and 'Henry V.' As a matter of pecuniary returns—this is our consideration for the moment, but has been among the last of Mr. Kean's considerations—the theatre, on whose stage he has expended so much, scarcely, even or except in case of an unusual 'run of success,' allowed of reimbursement to the manager. We are not, therefore, so much surprised at Mr. Kean's determination to retire from so hazardous a task, as that he has not abandoned it long since. And hitherto we have specified only the outward and visible difficulties of his management; those which are unseen have been, perhaps, even more oppressive—the anxiety to produce a true as well as lively picture of the scenes which the poet drew or presupposed; the innumerable details essential to such a picture, which none but a learned eye would detect, and which the public would regard with the apathy of the ignorant; and, lastly, the laborious researches in old and forgotten lore, which yet alone would afford the information required. If so much care and inquiry and toil have been spent 'in tenui,' on an ephemeral entertainment, the renown will not be also slight. For nine years Mr. Kean has shown how intimately allied the drama is with other arts; how necessary they are to its completeness; and how materially the amusement of a night may contribute to the permanent instruction of the multitude. The future historian will inscribe on his page no more deservedly honoured name than that of the present manager of the Princess's Theatre.

But skill and success in theatrical administration are not all that he will have to record of Charles Kean. A further tribute will be due to the accomplished gentleman, the steadfast friend, the liberal and considerate master, and the vigilant guardian of the humblest of his dependents. In his public capacity, Mr. Kean has had, in his day, his full share of evil tongues; but not even envy herself has called in question his personal virtues, though she long withheld from his professional abilities the meed which they so well deserved.

Of the thousands of spectators who yearly flock to the Princess's Theatre, very few are able to estimate the accuracy with which the drama is there represented. They see a succession of illustrative pictures in still or moving life, and they see no more. Few persons are competent to understand the full merit of a great picture or statue, or the entire beauty of a poem by Ten-

nyson. They behold in part; they take for granted in part; the minute touches which make up the sum of the effect are almost unavoidably hidden from any but an artist's eye. And a theatrical scene, however elaborately executed, is liable to disadvantages from which pictures and statues are exempt. These we can examine at leisure; the imperfect survey of to-day may be completed by the maturer study of to-morrow. They are contemplated by and for themselves only; they are independent of things or persons extraneous. It is not so with the pictorial aids and embellishments of the stage; they are merely auxiliary; they have no independent worth or significance. Within a few moments after the canvas descends, the action must commence; and the action, so far as the picture is concerned, is a disturbing force. Could the scenery alone, in any of Mr. Kean's 'revivals,' be combined, it would form a panorama as complete as any exhibited in Leicester Square. We should have glimpses of England as it was in the days of the Plantagenets and Tudors, and of Nineveh as it was when England had scarcely emerged from the waters. An indifferent tragedy of Byron's has become a vehicle for placing before hundreds, to whom Layard's splendid folios were, from their cost alone, sealed books, the state of the ancient capital of Assyria; Venice has been represented to the crowds who can never visit the Queen of the Adriatic; the city of Gelon and Hiero, the city which broke the might of Athens, and was defended by the science of Archimedes, has been portrayed; the palaces of the Normans in England, the abbeys and priories which Henry VIII. swept with the broom of desolation, the woods, heaths, and meres of Britain, as they appeared in their solitary grandeur before the plough or the high road obliterated their native features, have all been presented as adjuncts to the greatest dramas in the world at a little theatre in Oxford Street.

'Wherefore this waste?' has naturally been the cry of the old play-goer. Did Shakspeare write in order that in due time the theatrical upholsterer might flourish? Were not the decorations that sufficed for the Kembles and Macready good enough for Mr. Charles Kean? This, however, is a lamentation older perhaps than the oldest play-goer living is aware of. It dates neither from the management of Mr. Macready or Madame Vestris, nor even from that of the spectacle-loving John Kemble. As far back as the production of the 'Aglaura,' of Suckling, at the theatre in Dorset Gardens, in 1646, protests were entered against the excessive decoration of the stage. The proprietors of old-established theatrical stock—to wit, sign-boards, curtains, joint-stools, and 'three or four foils'—saw with dismay a deluge

coming on them in these ruinous innovations, and not unnaturally proclaimed the virtues of shabbiness. We need not trace these murmurs higher up or lower down; doubtless some one grumbled when the cart of Thespis was exchanged for a fixed stage; and when Pompey relieved his countrymen from the necessity of standing to witness the tragedies of Attius or Pacuvius. The Romans, however, liked sitting, and came to like decorations also, that for splendour and bad taste were probably unsurpassed at the time, and have never, it is hoped, been equalled since.¹

As yet, it must be owned, we have not been successful in detecting any particular decadence of the theatre; but we may go further and fare better. A passion for building has brought many to ruin; but we do not often find that people, on the verge of ruin, take to bricks and mortar. Some time ago when agriculture was said by numbers of comfortable-looking men to be at its last gasp, it was generally observed that more accommodation was providing in nearly every market-town for the sale of corn and cattle. Corn halls were rising up where none had been known before. The unfortunate farmers '*immemores sepulcri struebant domos.*' Something of the like sort has, during the last two years, been visible in the theatrical world.

The owners of property which, we are assured, is yearly becoming of less value, and which must, unless the stage can be resuscitated, come to a bad end, are constantly enlarging, improving, and adorning it. Men, indeed, set their houses in order before they die; but we are much deceived if this be the motive which has led to the reconstruction of the New Adelphi, or converted the Britannia and Grecian Saloons into handsome and convenient theatres. At the 'Old Adelphi,' the pleasure of seeing John Reeve or Mr. Wright was by no means without alloy. A strictly golden mean in stature was needed for enjoyment; any excess in latitude or longitude rendered its possessor ilable to a portion of Caliban's penalty, 'cramps, aches, and pains,' especially in the boxes, 'where the seats,' as we once heard a naval gentleman of inconvenient bulk observe, 'must have been meant for marines only.' At the New Adelphi, on the contrary, Daniel Lambert or the Norfolk giant might sit at ease. At the Britannia Theatre—the humbler appellation of *saloon* is fast vanishing—Mr. Lane has provided in his gallery seats for the working man in which he may slumber, if he list,

¹ Those who are curious on the subject of Roman theatrical pomp may consult Horace. Sat. ii. 1. Macrobian. Saturn. ii. 7. Martial. De Liber Spectaculis and Apuleius, Metamorph. x. p. 248; ed Bipont.

so well are they fitted to the ordinary build of persons whose thews and sinews are braced by toil ; while Mr. Conquest, at the Grecian Theatre, furnishes at least half his audience with elbow chairs ! We could enumerate many more instances of this provision for general comfort at other establishments ; but our immediate object is to point out that all these improvements are going on at a time when managers, we are informed, are either going or gone to the dogs.

Come we now to the character of the entertainments which pleased the last generation or which please ourselves. Here perhaps the reader will expect us to say ‘Sistimus, hic tandem nobis ubi defuit orbis’—‘We see land at last : we have touched at length on that hidden shoal of decrepitude, of which we have so long been in search.’ And now we must call in the aid of Mr. Fitzball to pilot us. But we must first protest against the trouble which his entire neglect of dates, to say nothing of other causes of confusion, has given us. We imagine—for we might almost as appropriately say we are sure of the chronology of the Pharaohs—that he began to write for the stage about the year 1818 or 1819 ; that is to say—for it is no further important—just after the retirement of John Philip Kemble, and about the time when the public began to grow weary of the ‘legitimate drama.’ Forty years ago although the patent theatres held, and for several years longer continued to hold their monopoly, the tide of public favour was ebbing from them and dispersing itself into many minor channels. It ebbcd, not because those privileged houses were too narrow for audiences : on the contrary, they had become of almost abnormal dimensions ; and while they taxed heavily the actor’s strength, precluded at least a third of the spectators from hearing or seeing comfortably. Nor did it ebb because of the dearth of actors, since each of the winter theatres, and the summer theatre, then called the *Little Haymarket*, were superbly mounted with both tragedians and comedians. At Drury Lane, Edmund Kean was in full vigour ; Elliston, a little damaged by Sherris sack, but still bounding and genial in *Ranger* and *Don Felix* ; Munden, an old actor indeed, but braving his years resolutely ; and Knight and Harley then in their prime. At Covent Garden, Charles Young and Charles Kemble almost concealed the void which the retirement of John Kemble had made ; Macready was yearly drawing attention to himself as the ‘*spes altera*’ of the scenic world ; while Liston, Farren, and Blanchard, Fawcett with his rasping voice and sarcastic humour, and Richard Jones, more articulate but less mercurial than his prototype Lewis, manned gallantly the

deck of comedy. Yet, and in spite of these and many other performers of either kind, and of both sexes, public favour was setting in other directions, and if the 'Examiner' newspaper of that day be correct, was beginning so to set before either Mrs. Siddons or her elder brother quitted the stage. 'King John,' we are afraid, was becoming a garment out of fashion some time before he made his final bow to the public, and a little black-eyed Spagnoletto-featured man, who disregarded measured cadences in speech and statuesque decorum in action, had stepped unceremoniously into his place. Other changes were openly or secretly at work. The literature of fiction was becoming a formidable rival to that of the stage. Byron's Alps, Conrads and Laras, though all of one type, and that type an unnatural one, had yet in them a stirring and demoniacal spirit more potent by far than the Pierres, Horatios, or Alonzos of the scene. Scott's novels were even more adverse to the 'regular drama' than Byron's poems: since, not only when read were they replete with picturesque incident and dramatic situations, affording therefore at home the sort of excitement once monopolized by the theatre, but they readily admitted also of adaptation to performance. Regularly as the 'Tales of my Landlord' or their successors came out, they were in Scott's phrase, *Terryfied*, that is, fitted to the scene by his friend Mr. Daniel Terry, or some other transmuter of novel-bullion into stage-currency. Then it was found that Cooper's nautical tales could be turned into plays with similar result. Writers for the stage had indeed returned to the practice of Shakspeare and most of his contemporaries. They took the popular novel for the theme of the popular play. Yet between the earlier and the later process there was this notable difference. In the *Terryfied* drama the writer, or, more properly, the manufacturer of the article used his scissors very often, his pen as seldom as he could: whereas in the Elizabethan time the novelist found the raw material only: the poet heightened the points of interest, and informed both what he borrowed and what he brought of his own with earnest passion or genial mirth. Daniel Terry and Thomas Dibdin knew what they were doing: they hit the popular taste: they paved the way for theatres of more convenient dimensions, and for plays which the masses could appreciate. The upper classes were deserting the theatre for the opera: the people who succeeded to the front rows of the pit had small zest for classicality of any kind. Long Tom Coffin was more to their taste than a wilderness of 'Catos,' and 'Rob Roy,' in their estimation, worth a dozen 'Fair Penitents' or 'Grecian Daughters.' It was an era of much change and

commotion: Wordsworth and Coleridge had begun to subvert, both by precept and example, the canons of taste and criticism which had guided Johnson, Beattie, and Blair: Scott and Byron, Moore and Campbell, introduced subjects into poetry yet unattempted in prose or rhyme, and the theatre, which, in order to live, must partake of the movements of the time, poured forth its full tide of novelties.

Mr. Fitzball's narrative relates principally to dramas represented at the minor theatres thirty years ago, and he gives some pithy and profitable anecdotes of what was then attractive on the stage. The spirit of Kotzebue entered very generally into the British playwrights. Strong emotions and startling situations were in universal request. Horrors unimagined by Monk Lewis or Mrs. Radcliffe were devised. Highwaymen became preachers of justice; pirates redressed wrongs which the law's arm was too short to reach; misers turned out in the fifth act to be the friends of mankind, and the scapegrace of the family their benefactor and deliverer, or at least his remorse was so edifying as to reconcile the spectator to his errors. What was spoken on the stage hardly mattered, provided only what was done on it was sufficiently astounding. Fathers pronounced most impressive blessings, or uttered such imprecations on disobedient children as could not fail to touch the stoniest heart in the sixpenny gallery. The lessons inculcated in good books fell short of the wholesome examples enforced behind the proscenium.

The fashion of this saturnalia in morals has nearly passed away: latterly even O. T. Smith appeared more frequently as the venerable or misguided old gentleman of common life, than arrayed in the terrors of horns and hoofs. The 'Vampire,' indeed, occasionally returns to earth in search of fresh victims: but 'Frankenstein' and the 'Flying Dutchman' seem to have quitted it for ever. The prince of darkness has again become a gentleman, and, unless in 'Don Giovanni,' rarely displays himself in his natural hideousness. Except between Christmas and Lent, when pantomime reigns paramount, the red-fire box seldom vomits its flames. We are grown more curious in the drama of private life. For ravines bristling with bandits, we have furnished drawing-rooms tenanted by 'civil-suited' gentlemen, and by ladies with their fair proportions magnified or hidden by crinoline. For thundering cataracts there are garden fountains; and gauntlets, buff boots, and sombrero hats are become nearly as strange costume as that in which Petruchio arrayed himself on his bridal morning.

It has already appeared that we are not of the number of

those who regard the triumph of mechanism and upholstery as a symptom of the decline of the drama. We believe, on the contrary, that Mr. C. Kemble, Mr. Macready, Mr. Phelps, and Mr. Charles Kean have rendered essential service to the stage by their endeavours to produce faithful historical pictures. If it were a step in the right direction to strip off Macbeth's brigadier uniform and to array the Thane of Fife in at least a Scottish garb, it has been no less an advance in the representative art to substitute for the bonnet and kilt of a Highlander the proper costume of an Anglo-Saxon noble and king. If John Kemble did well in 'restoring to the Moor his tunic and turban, whereas, until then, he had been dressed like Desdemona's footman,' Mr. Macready did no less well in representing the council chamber of Venice with its proper accoutrements, the grave attire of its senators and the libro d'oro in which their names were inscribed. Let any manager at whose theatre Shakspeare, or dramas of the classical school, are often performed, try the experiment of a return to primitive innocence as regards scenery and costume. An Othello attired like a guardsman in Hogarth's 'March to Finchley,' or King John dressed like Alderman Beckford in the Guildhall, would, we suspect, send home a modern pit in any but good humour. We remember to have seen Alexander the Great march in pomp through Babylon preceded by banners, one of which bore the Lion and Unicorn of England, and the other the S. P. Q. R. of a Roman emperor. The wrath even of the gods would be kindled at such a prodigy now-a-days. But it does not follow that the historical precision of the stage is necessary to atone for the defects of the performers. Of these we shall speak presently: meanwhile we call attention to the fact that the reform of the scenery and habiliments began and was carried to very considerable excellence by John Kemble himself, and we presume that not even the old play-goer will deny that *he* stood amid a circle of at least tolerable actors. Yet while his sister was still in full vigour, his brother unfolding new powers, and Charles Young seconding him, the great tragedian advanced the interests of the stage, while he complied with his own classical tastes, by rendering its accessories accordant with the dramas represented. Mr. Charles Kean himself, although with great advantages of archæological learning and scenic experience, is not more scrupulous than John Kemble was, in suiting the garb and pictorial auxiliaries of the play to its diction and passion. We have seen letters from the latter to his stage-manager or his mechanist, in which the most minute details of the fashion of a shield or a banner are explained as puncti-

liously as if he had been directing the march of a host, and not the transitory amusement of a leisure hour. The interleaved copies of his Roman plays, now we believe fitly deposited in the British Museum, display a most wide and accurate knowledge of those passages in Greek or Latin authors which illustrate the dress, manners, or customs of the imperial republic, and some of the croakers of that day are reported to have asked why, if Brutus must appear in a toga, Hamlet should not be attired like a born Scandinavian, in a bear-skin or a blanket?

A few anecdotes from Mr. Fitzball's chronicle will perhaps strengthen our position in regard to the general improvement of the drama. He commenced in most orthodox fashion with five-act tragedies, but soon found, as he himself tells us, 'his proper level' in a melodrama founded on Mrs. Opie's story of 'The Ruffian Boy.' Soon after he produced his 'Innkeeper of Abbeville,' from which epoch he dates 'his reign of scenes and vicissitudes.' Then he turned his hand to *Terryfication*-business, and dramatized the 'Fortunes of Nigel,' and with so much success, that it procured him a letter from Mr. Charles Kemble requesting him to call at Covent Garden Theatre. The result of his visit was the representation at that house of 'Father and Son; or the Rock of Charbonnier,' of which all parties, except the public, highly approved. 'The Pilot,' 'The Floating Beacon,' 'The Inchcape Bell,' 'The Devil's Elixir,' 'Jonathan Bradford,' 'Esmeralda,' 'The Flying Dutchman,' 'Azael,' with many of less note, followed one another at brief intervals. All these, when represented, were highly successful, running some fifty, some a hundred and even more nights. These were no common feats and let the author have full credit for them. But when we come to examine them as literary productions, they are nearly worthless—one might as well try to read Zadkiel's prophecies for the last 'Thirty-five years.'

The change in our social habits has borne the blame of impairing the taste for the stage. But it is only one of the causes that have contributed to this result. There are many offsets of the drama that affect the parent stem. 1st. There is what may be termed the comedy of the drawing-room, differing from theatrical entertainments only in being performed in a room, and by one or two actors in place of a company. Mr. and Mrs. German Reed, Mr. and Mrs. Howard Paul, Mr. Woodin, and others, though deservedly attractive, both diminish the available forces of the theatre, by standing apart from it themselves, and draw thousands yearly away from it by the popularity of their representations. 2ndly. Lectures on every imaginable subject gratify the taste for the drama without contributing to its welfare.

3rdly. The influence of club-life militates no less against the interests of tragedy and comedy than the old coffee-houses, where wits and templars used to congregate around Dryden and Addison, directly advanced them. From those incommodious rooms it was agreeable to migrate to the comparatively spacious play-house. Whereas gentlemen once comfortably ensconced in well-padded sofas and arm-chairs, and well provisioned for the evening with newspapers, periodicals, and novels, or discussing with congenial minds the fall of ministers or of stocks, the prospects of the grouse season or the opera season, are reluctant to imprison themselves in stalls and boxes, even if well-graced actors invite them.

4thly. Be it said, with all respect to plays and their providers, that they flourish best in times when the spectators have fewer resources in themselves. When the reading of a country gentleman seldom went beyond Baker's 'Chronicle,' and the 'News Letter,' and when linendrapers bold rarely opened a book except the Bible and the 'Whole Duty of Man,' the most flimsy of farces possessed a charm which it is almost impossible to realize in this much-reading, if not deep-reading generation.

5thly. The more general cultivation of music has materially affected the drama. Mr. Hullah and Exeter Hall, and the hundred and one singing-rooms in London, are powerful diversions from pit, gallery, and boxes. 'Music for the million' is one of the drawbacks on his receipts on which every manager must reckon. And the opera itself has added to its proper attributes the further attraction of excellent acting. The descriptions of an opera libretto, by Addison or Thornton, in the 'Spectator' and 'Connoisseur' are as inapplicable to 'Lucrezia Borgia,' or the 'Huguenots,' as Hone's or Collier's account of a morality or mystery is to a play of Shakspeare or Sheridan. It is on record that Addison's sketch of the lyrical drama of his day, when translated into Italian, convulsed even a pope with laughter, so utterly absurd were the words and sentiments which were then married to music. But Bulls and Decretals are scarcely more serious matters than 'Rigoletto' or the 'Trovatore,' and affect an audience like 'The Fatal Marriage' or 'Venice Preserved.' The opera has indeed long taken its place among the indirect opponents of the national theatres. It is notorious, that of the hundreds who habitually are seen in the stalls and boxes of Covent Garden Theatre, very few encourage the corresponding portions of the Adelphi and the Haymarket. It is not considered by the nobility of this country to be one of their social duties to maintain the English stage. To the above causes of the partial decline of the drama in England we forbear to add one that is usually alleged among the foremost—the religious

scruples which pervade a large class of the community. These we believe to have always been operative ever since the reopening of the theatres at the Restoration, and are therefore not material to our present purpose.

Among circumstances partially adverse to the prosperity of the stage, we may reckon the increased facilities for travelling and the natural desire for open-air recreations during the summer months. Formerly when a jaunt to the country or to the nearest seaport involved some hours' penance on a coach-top or in a sailing-packet, the prudent might balance between a theatre even in August and a weak stomach or slender purse. But now, '*tellus in longas est patefacta vias*,' a few pence will convey the tired citizen to Richmond or Greenwich Park; a few shillings will bear him to Margate or Brighton. The beginning of summer is also the beginning of sorrows to several of the metropolitan theatres. Plays that in May were proclaimed 'decided hits' and 'unprecedented successes,' pale their ineffectual fires in July and August before the counter-attractions of Surrey and Cremorne Gardens. The frequenters of pit and gallery are crowded on the deck of river-steamers. Under 'the brave o'erarching firmament,' they find not merely relief from the heated air of the playhouse, but also, among other more seasonable delights, a compensation even in kind, since these Arcadias of Cocayne have music and spectacles, and sometimes also a drama of their own. This is the season when, as Mr. Dickens says, Shakspeare played by wooden legs will not draw; and accordingly the actual and responsible manager either locks up his house, and informs the public that 'he will return in September,' or the company forms a republic and takes its chance of limited liability and limited profits. It would appear, indeed, that 'the rage of the dogstar' affects rather the suburbs than the centre of the theatrical world. It is Islington not the Haymarket, Southwark and not the Strand, which the Sirian star affects.

The wider circumference over which theatrical entertainments are now diffused may of course affect the interest of particular houses; but taking into account these adverse forces, and combining with it the fact that at least ten or twelve theatres keep open nearly all through the year, we are disposed to infer, that so far from being on the decline, the dramatic spirit has never been more active or spread over a wider surface than at the present moment. It is immaterial whether this arises from the increased population of the capital, or from a natural tendency in mankind towards dramatic entertainments. All that we are contending for is, that the general allegations of decay are unsupported by

facts. We may now, then, pass on to a different class of objections—the servile dependence of English theatrical literature on that of France. Two-thirds, at least, it is alleged, of our popular plays are translated or adapted from the French. For our country's credit, we could wish that the proportion were reversed; and that we were rather 'native than hospitable to famous wits.' Yet there is some compensation for this barrenness on our part, and provided we are well served, we are not disposed to carp at the pedigree of the article. For whether is it better to return to such a state of things as Mr. Fitzball has recorded—to the vapid patriotism of such plays as the 'English Fleet' and the 'Poor Gentleman,' to the maudlin sentimentality of 'Speed the Plough' and 'Every one has his Fault,' to the 'demoniac phrenzy' of the melodrama—or to import and naturalize pieces that have already been on trial and obtained a verdict in favour? Mr. Robson does not play a bit the worse in 'The Porter's Knot' because it is borrowed from 'Les Crochets du Père Martin,' neither was he the less admirable in Daddy Hardacre because Bouffet had previously acted in 'La Fille de l'Avare.'

From M. Charles Bernard's novel of 'Le Gendre,' Mr. Tom Taylor made the excellent play to which we have already alluded; nor can we discover that John Mildmay, as performed by Mr. Wigan, is at all the worse for his foreign parentage. Protection to native industry would have done the public an ill turn had it prevented Mr. Kean from acting his admirable characters in the 'Corsican Brothers' and 'Lewis XI.' Nor can we regret that Mr. G. H. Lewes has occasionally borrowed from French originals, since his loans are generally repaid with interest. Such grafts are taken from a living stock: for the Parisian drama, however objectionable it may be in its ethics, is, as a general rule, never dull, seldom ill-constructed or tedious, and, for the most part, equally remarkable for the coherence of its motives and the unforced character of its wit and pathos. Each year shows that we cannot return to the old English comedy or farce any more than we can return to the red heels of our great-grandsire's shoes, his cocked hat, or his clouded cane. Their general unfitness for the modern stage is shown by the necessity for compressing them in representation. We require action more rapid and dialogue more concise than that which contented our more patient ancestors. To our feelings there is much unnecessary circumstance even in such comedies as the 'Clandestine Marriage' and 'The Jealous Wife.' Nor is this feeling confined to the productions of dramatic writers. Our forefathers not only endured, but admired, details in poetry, and

in narrative found no fault with the prolixity of a Chronicle, or even the perpetual digressions of Burnet and Clarendon. Now even the 'Faery Queen' is accounted tedious, and few persons have fortitude enough to read through Holinshed or Hall. If we have imported some objectionable matter from the French theatre, our recent playwrights have imbibed from it the essential art of condensation.

The French intellect is, indeed, pre-eminently a logical one. The prevalence of the ratiocinative over the imaginative powers is the vice of their classical poetry and even of their classical drama. Boileau and Voltaire, Corneille and Racine, would be more effective, if they less habitually reasoned in verse. But what is a fault in poetry, is a virtue in history and the prose-drama. In narrative, this logical power has rendered French writers second only to the greatest historians of antiquity, with whom, indeed, the manner often surpasses the matter. In comedy, and in that native product of France, the Comédie Vaudeville, the charm of the fable, and the secret of its attraction, lie in the strict coherence of the scenes, in the causative evolution of the story. The premises may be absurd; the moral vicious; the dilemma impossible, 'beyond the bounds of Salic land.' But once admit the premises, and the chain of continuity is adamant, and leads by the finest yet the most natural degrees to the conclusion. The greatest of Italian dramatic writers, so far as regards the manipulation of his plots, is a Frenchman in soul. The 'Saul,' the 'Filippo Secundo' of Alfieri, are each of them a sorites of closely-welded motives conducting to an inexorable end. What the poet added to the French framework of his tragedies is the fervid eloquence in which Italy has always excelled. Schiller's 'Philip the Second,' although far more imaginative than Alfieri's play on the same subject, is, as a drama, very inferior to it. In this, as in the greater number of German plays, the action labours and the plot stands still. It is this concinnity, this exclusion of what does not immediately help forward the movement of the action, that renders the French drama the most popular in nearly every capital of Europe.

Charles Lamb launched some very wholesome anathemas against those who judge of the merits of poetry by comparison, and who will not allow any merit to Mr. A. because he does not write according to the manner of some elder Mr. B. His protest may be extended to the critics of actors. They are nearly all of them possessed with a spirit of unreflecting conservatism. They try the present by the past, and if it do not comply with some conventional, and often fallacious, standard

they condemn it as wrong or worthless. A Dublin manager was startled by discovering at rehearsal that John Kemble did not intend performing *Alexander the Great* after the fashion of the old-established Mr. Dignum. What would the pit say of such departure from the ancient ways? Colley Cibber durst not for some time act *Fondlewife* in the '*Old Bachelor*' according to his own conceptions of the part, because the actor whom he succeeded in it had set a pattern. There is a very angry letter of old Macklin's, on the subject of Garrick's presumption in performing *Lear* after a manner unauthorized by Betterton and Quin; and forty years ago it was a standing charge on the theatrical police-sheet that Edmund Kean broke through all the traditions of the stage. In this case the offender perfectly understood the value of the objection. 'What did Lord Essex think of you?' said the tragedian's anxious wife after his first impersonation of *Othello* in London. 'The pit rose at me,' was his curt and significant reply. This conservative scarecrow was long put up in Mr. Macready's path. He did not walk in the ways of the Kembles. It was long a hindrance to Mr. Charles Kean, who was expected to copy his father by the sons of the very prophets who censured his father for not being moulded upon somebody else. It was one of Mr. Macready's prominent merits that, on all occasions, he thought for himself, and took no heed of tradition. It was this independence, combined, indeed, with extraordinary power of embodying his conceptions, that slowly yet surely raised him above the level even of so finished an actor as Mr. Charles Young. It has been a similar firmness in rejecting the ceremonial law of his profession that has raised Mr. Charles Kean to his present position in it. Every one of his parts is strongly individualised. He acts well because he has meditated deeply, and throughout his wide range of impersonations has weighed not what the audience may or may not expect, but what the poet has appointed him to do.

Whether or no we have satisfactorily shown that the decline of the drama is a kind of cuckoo-cry, begun on insufficient grounds, and has been repeated without examination, it will be for our readers to determine. We have at least proved that it amounts, so far as it is valid, to little more than this—certain branches of the dramatic art, like certain species of social habits and feelings, have fallen into the sere and yellow leaf, without, however, materially impairing the trunk from which they spring. To resuscitate and replace these withered boughs is not in the power of either the ministers or the purveyors of the stage. Wilks and Woffington could not again make Sir Harry Wildair

popular; nor John Palmer or Kemble render the 'Fair Penitent' attractive. Stilted words and manners do not belong to our generation, and will probably never again reflect the features of any generation to come. The supporters of the theatres are the middle classes: and it is for the managers to consider how they may enlist in their behalf the greatest number of this order. We will venture to offer a few suggestions upon what, in our opinion, it will be for the interest of all parties concerned to do or to leave undone.

First, then, theatrical entertainments are in evil repute with a great number of persons, who are neither uncharitable in their judgment of others, nor addicted to morose forms of religion. We should not despair of converting many of them into occasional supporters of the stage, provided those who cater for the public amusement would agree in discountenancing certain kinds of dramas. All that tends to make people think lightly of the marriage-bond, or even represents the relations of husband and wife as a fair subject for satire or ridicule, should be banished from the theatre. The example of past times may be pleaded in extenuation of the practice; but if we have nearly put on the shelf the plays of a past age, the morals that are exhibited in them should be shelved also. Neither can we admit the argument that because we borrow, and are perhaps likely to continue borrowing liberally from the French drama, we must take the evil with the good, and import the moral as well as the mechanism of the plot. Human life will always abound with follies and vanities sufficient for the exercise of legitimate satire, without its being necessary to assail the citadel of family-life. Even in a literary point of view the drama would be a gainer by the exclusion of such themes. It is notorious that half of the French vaudevilles rest on the supposition that marriage is an affair of social convenience, and not one in which the affections of the parties are in the least concerned. There is some pretext, therefore, if there is no real justification for a wife, whose heart is not preoccupied, listening to a lover; for a husband finding some one more attractive to him than the mistress of his household. Whether marriages in England are happier on the whole than marriages in France, we do not propose to inquire. It is rather a question for a statistical society than for the pages of a Review. But at least mere convenience is not the avowed pretext for marriage in this country, and to represent it as such on the stage, accompanied with the usual accompaniments of intrigue and dissimulation, is as false in fact as it is in morality. That it is possible to discharge this noxious element, and yet to produce a sterling play, has been repeatedly proved in the

excellent comedies of Mr. Tom Taylor, Mr. Palgrave Simpson, and Mr. Stirling Coyne. No careful father need prohibit their plays to his children, any more than he need lay an interdict on such novels as 'John Halifax,' 'Two Years Ago,' or 'Adam Bede.' Let not a manager imagine that in the end he is a gainer by favouring attempts to confound the ideas of right and wrong. Were it once known that he steadfastly rejected such pieces as dally with the principles of morals, that the performances at his theatre, so far from raising a blush on the cheek of youth, do not even insinuate a doubt, and we are persuaded that he would recruit his stalls and boxes with hundreds of persons who are now deterred by their well-grounded scruples from frequenting them. The stage, we have already seen, is indebted for many of its absurdities to a perverse adherence to tradition; to the same cause it owes also much of its evil repute. The shadows which the license of Dryden, Congreve, and Farquhar threw over it generations ago are not quite withdrawn; the charges which Jeremy Collier brought against its immorality and profaneness are not wholly refuted. To scatter the one, to neutralise the others, completely and for ever, is the business of those who select, in the first instance, the entertainments of the theatre. And in this instance their duty coincides with their interest. A purified scene will in the end lead to a flourishing exchequer.

2ndly. The purgation of the theatre must extend to a lower description of audience than that which we have just been considering. The kind of drama which once reigned paramount at the old Coburg Theatre, and was by no means unpalatable or unusual in houses of higher pretensions, has fortunately become rather the exception than the rule. It is no longer usual to edify the spectators by the exhibition of the crimes which end with the Old Bailey. The payers of sixpences and threepences may be entertained without its being necessary to found the story of the play on the lives of famous highwaymen, or to represent burglary and larceny as the most exciting if not the most meritorious of human careers. What the novel or the oft-repeated tale was once to the poetical playwright, the 'Newgate Calendar' and Police Reports became afterwards to their prosaic successors. We are convinced that the total extinction of this species of drama would be equally a boon to the manager who shut his doors against it, and to the general interests of the profession. There is a general wish, at least there is a general expression of willingness to elevate the character of the stage. It is not a difficult one to carry into effect. It is competent for every manager to strike his pen through such pieces on his list

as depend for their interest upon the exhibition of profligacy and crime. The reproach which clings to the theatre would be materially lessened, were it once resolved to exclude from it the false heroism of the Turpins, Claude Duvals, and Jack Shepards.

3rdly. Respect for the art which at least they profess to hold in honour, ought to impress managers with their responsibility in the choice of their entertainments. It may be pleaded that a piece which seems the most likely 'to draw' is the one which a prudent manager will select. Such a principle, however, if rigidly acted on, argues little respect for either the public or the histrionic profession. We doubt even its policy. It has a seeming wisdom; but it is not the less a real error. Dramas that trench on the bounds of social morality tend to foster many otherwise unreasonable prejudices against the theatre, and keep away from its doors perhaps as many persons as now resort to them. The alternative does not lie between sober dulness and misdirected levity; but between the lawful ends of dramatic representation and their opposite. It is the province of comedy, whether in five acts or in one, to shoot folly as it flies, and to embody either the 'Cynthia of the minute,' the ephemeral foibles of the time, or to grapple with those catholic elements of sport, which are common to all ages of society. Comedy, in this its legitimate sphere, affords scope for mirth that 'after no repenting draws.' But comedy dealing with follies on the confines of vice, or with vices that in real life bear the bitter fruit of crime, is equally an offence in ethics and in art. Again, on the ground of taste and respect for their profession, care in the choice of pieces for representation should be among a manager's first considerations. Audiences are not amended, nor actors dignified by dramas of which the proper stage is the police court. On this account, we are at a loss to conceive how such excellent caterers for the public as Messrs. Robson and Emden usually approve themselves, can have accepted one of their recent novelties. 'Retained for the Defence' is not, like the 'Beggar's Opera,' a refined satire in palpable disguise, but a bare verity of low life. It would need a most microscopic eye to detect in this farce any merit beyond the opportunity it affords to Mr. Robson for portraying the features of vulgar crime. No one doubted that he could represent the humours of the street to the life: no one, we imagine, wished to see him again degraded to the level of 'Jim Bagges,' with the further demerit of being dishonest as well as low-lived. The whole genus, Burlesque, is, again, in our opinion, a scandal to the stage. Precedent and popularity afford no excuse for their sins against all parties

concerned—the author who abuses his talents, the actor who profanes his gifts, the manager who misemploys his instruments, or the spectator who enjoys a barren laugh and spends an unprofitable hour. Southey, in his excellent ‘Life of Cowper,’ records as miserable a bit of pleasantry as it ever entered the heart of man to conceive, although it emanated from no less persons than Bonnel Thornton, the elder Colman, and other members of the ‘Nonsense Club.’ They opened an Exhibition of sign-paintings in Bow Street, Covent Garden, aiming in this ponderous jest at the annual exhibition of pictures made by the Society for the Promoting of Arts, Manufactures, and Commerce, previous to the institution of the Royal Academy. As in the middle of the eighteenth century art was at a low ebb in England, nothing could be well devised more likely to keep it at that level than an exhibition in dishonour of it. In the anniversary year of this precious drollery, 1856, Thornton and his co-mates would doubtless have composed, with a similar laudable purpose, Burlesques for the theatres. The earlier buffoons, indeed, were the less mischievous; they did not degrade the artists whom they held up to ridicule. Whereas in such performances as *travesties* of Shakspeare, and in Mazeppa and Massaniello, the actor himself is called on to degrade his own profession, and to profane his own powers of humour and passion. Perhaps, however, Burlesque, on all occasions mischievous, was never more absurd than in the summer of 1856. A great tragic actress, the greatest, perhaps, whom the present generation will behold, was at the moment rivalling in the Italian drama the performances of Mrs. Siddons, Miss O’Neill, and Miss Fanny Kemble in days gone by. A manager, than whom no one was better qualified to appreciate the genius of Madame Ristori, employs an actor of equal excellence with himself to burlesque her impersonation of ‘Medea.’ This was the tribute paid by Englishmen to consummate histrionic powers! Nor was this outrage on good feeling and good taste—we can afford it no gentler name—perpetrated at a theatre where the spectators are mostly ‘rude mechanicals,’ and where illiterate appetites may be pardoned for relishing coarse fare. But it was deliberately committed at a theatre where refined and intellectual people congregate, and where the performances and the performers are worthy of such audience. What would be said of caricatures of the Apollo, or the Laocoon, or of any or the greater sacred or secular pictures now in the National Gallery, of a comic ‘Paradise Lost,’ or even a parody on the ‘Seasons,’ or the ‘Task?’ Would the artist who lent himself to such an offence be applauded by the public or mentioned honourably by Mr. Ruskin? Would Messrs.

Longman or Murray pay guineas per sheet to the burlesquing poet? We have too good an opinion of the eminent publishers, of the artistic critic, and of the public generally, to suppose that they would pay or praise such unseasonable fun; and we therefore the more regret that the stage should be the only vent for a species of humour that discredits and degrades all who furnish or foster it.

4thly. We are of opinion that the alleged decline of the National Theatre is, in great measure, owing to its defective organization. We shall pass over this portion of our subject briefly, because the question has of late so often been asked, why particular theatres should not confine themselves generally to particular species of entertainment. No one in the habit of attending the Princess's or Sadler's Wells Theatres can have failed to remark the advantages obtained by the careful drilling of their respective companies. In the first instance, the advantage is doubtless owing to the example and intelligence of the excellent actors who preside over them respectively: yet much is also obtained by the limited range of dramas which are there performed. The actors and actresses at these houses are constantly engaged in impersonating the classical drama; and, not being required to play Sheridan at the beginning of the week and vaudeville or melodrama at the end of it, they acquire a familiarity with their work, and a precision in their execution of it, which cannot be found at houses where the entertainments are more capricious. In a less degree, but still in considerable measure, the benefits to be obtained from classification of the drama are visible at the Haymarket, Adelphi, and Olympic. Let the principle of subdivision be carried out generally, and we shall then have no occasion to regret the era of the patent theatres, or even the almost total extinction of those provincial schools of the actor, which were once afforded by the Bath, York, and Norwich theatres. We have already commended the superior construction of the French plays, as regards precision of dialogue and coherence of plot. Our neighbours are little less exemplary in their division and appropriation of their theatrical entertainments. With them the classical drama has its home: the vaudeville and melodrama do not wander from their accustomed haunts: and it is scarcely needful to consult a newspaper or a playbill to ascertain the kind of representation which will be afforded in the evening. The result is alike favourable to the actor and the audience. Experience renders the one adroit, the other sagacious. The comedian does not wander unskilfully into the domain of tragedy: the tragic actor is not enforced to assume

the levity or mirth which he has not in him; but each by the several experience gained in his proper province, acquires that ease and completeness which the higher talents alone exhibit on the English stage.

There remains only one more symptom of theatrical decadence to examine—the alleged inferiority of the art of acting itself. We might dispose of it summarily by reminding our readers that this also, like the complaint of the decay of theatrical literature, and of excess in decoration, is of ancient standing. In John Kemble's days there were lamentations for the absence of Henderson, Garrick, Mrs. Yates, and Mrs. Prichard; and when Kemble retired, he was deplored by the generation which possessed Edmund Kean and Macready. 'Extinctus amabitur idem' might be taken as an inscription for every eminent performer's tombstone. We have met the complainers on all former counts with a denial, or at least a question, of the justice of their regret; nor are we disposed to admit its validity on the present one. We allow, indeed, that certain kinds of acting have degenerated or disappeared. The gentleman of the old school, such as he was represented by Charles Kemble or Elliston, no longer lingers on the boards: neither does his prototype meet us in life. The substance survives: the accidents in which it was clad belong to the past. We doubt whether Mr. Wigan could, we are sure that Mr. Charles Matthews could not, play Young Mirabel, Don Felix, Leon, or Charles Surface. They could neither render the epigrammatic wit, or the sententious poetry of the older comedy; nor could its elaborate polish of manners sit easily on shoulders unaccustomed to the yoke of such ceremony, as prevailed in the high life of a century ago. But, on the other hand, each of these admirable artists has struck out a line for himself, as purely original as that of the Palmers, Holmans, and Kembles. In the *bourgeois* gentleman, the type of modern manners and middle life, Mr. Wigan is unsurpassed, and will not readily be equalled: in eccentric comedy we doubt whether there ever has been any one superior to Mr. Mathews. Similar compensations for departed talents might be found in nearly every department of acting; but our space will not permit us to expatiate on more than a few conspicuous examples.

The most completely extinct species is the testy, choleric old gentleman of comedy, as he was embodied within the memory of many who do not yet write themselves old, by Munden, Dowton, and Fawcett. In a recent notice of that excellent actor, the late lamented Mr. Harley, he was taxed, not in an unkind spirit, but in our opinion not the less erroneously, with

transgressing the bounds of probability in his representation of grave and ancient signors. In the first place, Harley had been trained in the school of Munden and Banister, and, in the next, their portraitures were often drawn from the life. We have frequently heard it remarked by those who mark human qualities with a learned eye, that there are now neither old men nor young men. A certain similar staidness pervades all ages, from twenty to threescore and ten. However it may be with young England, the remark is certainly true of the manners of the sere and yellow leaf of the day as compared with their grandsires. Whether it were that wigs and flapped waistcoats, shoe-buckles and three-cornered hats, heartier appetites and stronger potations, rendered parents and guardians more eccentric in seeming formerly than now, we cannot undertake to determine. But that the old man of the stage was not a mere imagination of the actor, any tolerable collection of family portraits will prove. The facility of locomotion has had much to do with the removal of the varieties of the human species. We are in some degree become like the builders of the first tower on record, a people of one speech and language. The country justice, the village lawyer and doctor, even the original country parson, are seldom to be found out of books. They walk from one end to the other of the metropolis without exciting a passing comment; they are even tolerably at their ease in Paris or Vienna, though their dialect be still of somewhat Babylonish fashion. Matthew Bramble, however, and Sir Anthony Absolute were scarcely caricatures in their day. The rural magnate, who seldom stirred from his hall, and whose longest excursion was, if he were not knight of the shire, to 'the Bath' or to London, lived among his equals and dependents a kind of 'principality or power.' His word was law; his prejudices were respectable; his ignorance was generally profound; and his temper, even when not exasperated by gout—a rare exception—was nurtured by the indulgence of his whims. His modern representative reads the 'Times,' the reports of at least agricultural societies, his liberal or conservative review, and drinks little wine and less ale. His hand is still heavy on poachers, and he occasionally launches a bolt at tenants who will not follow him to the hustings, or at dissenters who oppose a church-rate. But he is no longer the John Bull who believed in George the Third, or who imagined himself, in right of his birth, a superior being to every foreigner. He does not look upon the vicar of his parish as either a Parson Adams or a Parson Supple, nor on himself as the oracle of the village club or petty sessions. Society has gained, the stage has lost, by the nearly total disappearance of

the old country gentleman: and we much doubt whether the acting of a Parsons or a Munden would excite in a modern theatre any feelings except those of curiosity and surprise. The Demeas and Micios of the stage no longer correspond to living realities. Congreve's fools have become more interesting to the historian than to the public; Sir Sampson Legend is as much a fossil as Hudibras; and Sir Francis Gripe is as remote from our days as Prince Eugene or Admiral Vernon.

The number of theatres, by diffusing the performers over a wider surface than formerly, renders it more difficult to sum up the account of histrionic merit. An age, however, can hardly be called deficient in comedians which reckons among its actors, in addition to those already enumerated, Buckstone, Webster, Compton, Wright, the Keeleys, Mr. Addison of the Olympic, and Mr. Ray of the Sadlers' Wells Theatre. Nor will any one who has witnessed Mr. Phelps's representation of Old Dornton and Sir Peter Teazle refuse to that accomplished actor the meed of possessing a genuine comic vein. In the days of the patent theatres these scattered lights would have been exhibited in a narrower compass, and mutually illustrated one another. It is not necessary to inquire whether their dispersion or condensation better serves the interests of the drama. Their co-existence is enough for our immediate object—the denial of any material decline in the art of impersonation.

The space which remains to us must be devoted to what will be the most memorable event of the present theatrical season—the retirement of Mr. Kean from the Princess's Theatre. Of some circumstances connected with his directorship we have already spoken. But the nine years of Mr. Kean's management form too important an epoch in the recent history of the stage to be dismissed with merely a few words of recognition. We shall endeavour to collect under a few heads the leading characteristics of this 'novennium,' partly because of their intrinsic value, and partly because it is probable that the present generation at least will not witness or have to record any theatrical events of the same or similar importance.

Mr. Charles Kean, in conjunction with Mr. Keeley, opened the Princess's Theatre in the autumn of 1850. The classical and poetical drama of England had then only one fixed abode, the Sadler's Wells Theatre, where Mr. Phelps had established regular tragedy and comedy in the once exclusive domain of melodrama and pantomime. In 1850, and for a few months in the following year, the stage retained one of the most consummate artists who ever adorned it, but Mr. Macready had ceased to preside over Covent Garden or Drury Lane, and these former

temples of Shakspeare were handed over to music, or to such casual and capricious performances as their respective managers found most expedient for their interests. The destiny of Covent Garden was worthier of its antecedents than was that of its ancient rival. It had become a permanent Italian opera-house ; whereas Drury Lane was everything by turns and nothing long, now blazing with such spectacles as 'Azael' or 'Nitocris,' now converted into an equestrian circus, or given up to such miscellaneous exhibitions as defy alike definition or classification under any known category of theatrical entertainments. The Haymarket Theatre alone afforded a last refuge to the poetical drama : there Mr. Macready received his final 'plaudite,' and displayed for the last time his noble impersonations of Roman and English heroes and kings. His *Virginus*, *King John*, *Lear*, *Coriolanus*, *Othello*, *Hamlet*, and *Henry IV.*, were indeed deprived of the pictorial accessories with which as *manager* he had surrounded them ; but the informing spirit of the *actor* remained, and was never more impressively felt or displayed than in the closing hours of its presence on the stage.

The Princess's Theatre, until the autumn of 1850, had drifted since its erection on the tide of accidents. Its situation in one of the great arterial roads of the metropolis was a favourable one, and this advantage was improved by the energy and sagacity of its lessee. But it had no peculiar function. Sometimes light comedy was in the ascendant, with Mr. Charles Mathews for its captain ; sometimes it was the home of English opera ; and sometimes it united the tragic forces of Mr. Macready, Miss Fanny Kemble, and Miss Cushman. But Mr. Charles Kean was the first to fix its destinies for any considerable period of time. His course was all before him where to choose. If native genius were blooming unseen, the new managers were prepared to foster it, and indeed at first, although not with any remarkable success, produced several novelties of home growth. There might also be some hope in a dextrous manipulation of melodrama ; and this experiment proved the more prosperous of the two, since Mr. Kean threw his whole energy into its production and representation. Lastly, there was the reserve of Shakspeare and the old poetical drama, in which the manager himself, and the distinguished lady who shares his name and reputation, had already taken their position, both at home and in America. These early efforts, however, were merely *tentamina*—the uncertainties that unavoidably precede a fixed and celebrated career. In 1853 Mr. Kean became sole manager of the Princess's Theatre, and with that year really opened the path to his present well-earned fame, both as

manager and actor. The difficulties of his task were enhanced by the circumstance that he followed in the track of the Kembles, Mr. Macready, and Mr. Phelps. But the 'pereant qui ante nos nostra fecerunt' was rather a seeming than a real impediment. With the materials which they had bequeathed him, upon the structures they had raised, Mr. Kean erected a still more superb monument to Shakspeare and the higher species of drama. And this he has done under many disadvantages peculiar to himself. His company, though well handled, has, with the exception of its two presiding spirits, at no period been a strong one: his stage was ill adapted to the effects produced upon it; and the capacity of his theatre was out of all proportion to the risk of his adventure.

We do not propose to recall to our readers circumstances which must still be fresh in their recollection. It must suffice to put on record that, since the year 1853, one or more 'revivals' of Shakspeare have been as regularly looked for at the Princess's Theatre as the Chancellor's budget, the Exhibition of the Royal Academy, or the Derby day. This little and not very commodious theatre has, during the present management, become an estate in the scenic realm. Plays that formerly would not fill half the house have become more popular than the most attractive novelties. Even a new life was infused into a stock-piece like 'Pizarro,' and into the tediousness of 'Sardanapalus.' A ghost story has been invested with such interest as children feel on the first perusal of the 'Old English Baron.' The theatre has become a school of art, history, and archæology; and again the stalls of an English playhouse have been filled with spectators as accomplished and intellectual as those who flocked to the impersonations of Garrick and Barry, of Mrs. Siddons and her majestic brothers. We do not despair of the vitality of the national theatre, because, in a little month, Mr. Kean will no longer preside over its performances. But we cannot be blind or indifferent to the loss which it will sustain on his retirement from the helm. It is not probable that his managerial mantle will be caught up by any equal or kindred spirit; it is as little likely that his place as an actor will be supplied. We trust, indeed, that his departure from the directorship is long antecedent to his valedictory appearance on the stage; and that, even with inferior accessories, he will for some years to come repeat the characters which he has so profoundly studied and so excellently embodied. And when, a second Prospero, he breaks his wand and buries his book, he will have the assurance of knowing that he has not merely earned an imperishable name in the annals of the stage, but that he has

under many disadvantages and much discouragement at the outset, infused a new life into the highest forms of the drama, and handed on its torch to some future bearer in the race.

It may be thought that we have taken too hopeful a view of the present condition and the probable future of the stage in England. The opinions we have expressed are not, indeed, in accordance with the usual assertions and predictions of its decline. We have not, however, left out of the account either the circumstances which militate against theatrical prosperity from without, or the causes which undermine it from within. Yet, on comparing the stage as it is at the present moment, with what it was thirty years ago, we discover more reasons for hope than for despondency. We have traced a marked improvement of late in theatrical literature; we have endeavoured to show that if certain kinds of acting have declined, others have taken their place; that the superb accompaniments of the Shakspearian drama have been the means of diffusing its general popularity over a wider surface, and that the prejudices, unwholesome for both parties, that severed the profession of the actor from that of kindred artists, are gradually but surely dying out. We have seen, also, that within a very brief period, new, spacious, and well-appointed theatres have risen on the foundation of old and incommodious ones, and that with the improvement of the house there has been, in each case, an improvement in the nature and quality of the performance. These are hopeful symptoms; and should a chronicler arise at the end of another thirty-five years of theatrical proceedings, it will probably be his privilege to report that higher and better plays than 'Omala' filled the Olympic, and that the Surrey supplied its exchequer from less questionable sources than 'Jonathan Bradford.'

THE ART EXHIBITIONS OF 1859.

Notes on some of the principal Pictures exhibited in the Room of the Royal Academy, &c. &c. No. V. 1859. By John Ruskin. M.A., &c. London: Smith, Elder, & Co.

THERE are countless small worlds, as the phrase is, in the great world of London. For instance, we hear of the religious world, of the scientific world, or the sporting world. And each has its literary organ and its annual encœnia. The May meetings, the Derby-day, and the peripatetic gatherings of the British Association, when they recur, contrive to snatch a fragmentary share of the attention of the general public. Even the smaller interests of the Microscopical Society or the Architectural Museum succeed in crowding the remote galleries of South Kensington once a year at their conversaziones. But none of these represent more than an infinitesimal portion of educated society. It would be a *bêtise* to assume that all one's neighbours were interested in the speciality, whatever it may be, which has so many charms for one's own mind; and the most ardent enthusiast in any of the hobbies of the day reserves his transports, if he has any share of discretion, for the few who are like-minded with himself. But the lovers and connoisseurs of the Fine Arts may flatter themselves, we think, that their tastes and sympathies are more catholic than any others. It is a very large public indeed that professes to feel an interest in the several art-exhibitions of the season. Be it mere fashion, or be it a more intelligent sentiment, the fact remains, that the most remarkable pictures of the year are discussed in almost every cultivated circle. Like the natural harvest of the autumn, the art-harvest of the spring is one of the few subjects which it is safe in mixed society to substitute for conversational common-places about the weather. In the month of May, indeed, the questions 'What do you think of the Exhibition?' or 'Is it a good Exhibition?'—questions so hard to answer categorically—are positively epidemic. They would be as troublesome as the hay fever, if it were not that they testify to the widely-spreading interest in art which is one of the most hopeful symptoms of our social condition. We could ill dispense with any such correctives of the material tendencies of the age. The healthy exercise of the imaginative faculties is more than ever necessary at a time when the general current of mental effort sets so strongly in an utilitarian and practical direction. It is the very mission of the Fine Arts to keep alive a sense of the ideal and a

love of beauty in the midst of the grosser actualities of material progress, accumulated wealth, and commercial activity. Even physical science, elevating and ennobling as it is, cannot be reckoned among the *literæ humaniores*, as they are called very expressively; and far more is a refining and spiritualizing influence needed to counteract the peculiar evils of our modern *bourgeoise* civilization. Good taste, hard as it may be to define, is a most desirable acquisition for a people. In some respects it is to a community what good breeding is to an individual. It does not, indeed, make up for the absence of still higher qualities, but in some sort it is a compensation for their deficiency. The highest ideal of *καλοκἀγαθία* includes a strong development of the religious principle in the character; but short of this, every one knows by experience that it is far pleasanter to have to deal with a gentleman than with one who has never learnt to respect himself or others. And however much we may esteem a society that is sound at the core, though rude and coarse in its outward bearing, there is no one who does not prefer a certain polish and refinement of manner. No Englishman, however reserved and austere in his own demeanour, can resist the charm of foreign courtesy when he crosses the Channel. And one of the chief drawbacks to the pleasure of travelling in the United States, or in some of our own ruder colonies, is said to be a certain indefinable air of vulgarity and bad taste that meets one on all sides. We are far from claiming a full immunity from this charge for ourselves. There is quite enough to shock a fastidious mind and eye in the flaunting vulgarity of cockney villas or the thriving bustle of a manufacturing suburb. But then there are always redeeming features. Hard by, for instance, there will be some ancient church or some other remnant of the past throwing its spell over the present; and, generally, the traditions and associations of an older refinement are not yet extinct among us. We have not yet run into universal license, in small matters as well as great, in order to prove our independence. And the Englishman's instinctive adhesion to the motto, *Ne quid nimis*, if it has not been a positive auxiliary to the acquirement of good taste, has at least been a preservative from that exaggeration which is of the essence of bad taste.

But there is no reason that commercial prosperity should be associated with all the offensive externals of selfish and vulgar ostentation. Look at Venice and Genoa, Bruges and Nuremberg. Of old, the burgher or merchant or shopkeeper had quite as deep and real a sense of fitness and beauty as their betters, if betters they were. And so it may be again; and so it *will* be, if nothing happens to check the present tendencies of public

feeling. It is undeniable that a growing love for the Fine Arts is manifesting itself in this country in all ranks of society. There are innumerable proofs of this assertion. The criticism of art is now an acknowledged function of every newspaper. Even the provincial journals spare some of their columns from the inconceivably petty local details which form their staple for the discussion of the last new engraving, or the description of some unsaleable picture which in desperation is making the tour of the county towns. And every new church that is built, or old one that is restored, is forthwith reviewed by the local papers with the whole apparatus of technical terminology. Religious architecture, indeed, in its churches, schools, and parsonages, may be said to have laid a foundation throughout the country for a new superstructure of artistic progress. Building, from a mere trade, has become an art; and villas, shop-fronts, and even meeting-houses, are seldom erected without some regard to architectural proprieties. So, too, is it with other forms of art, and notably in the case of music. If one may judge, not merely from the concerts or oratorios of the great towns, but from the innumerable village choirs of which we hear on all sides, England is rapidly becoming a musical country. To meet an entirely new want, diocesan choral festivals are being organized in cathedral after cathedral; and rival publishers of music for the million outbid each other with fabulously cheap editions of standard compositions. The Art Union of London takes vast credit to itself for popularizing, beyond all precedent, a taste for pictures. To some extent this may be true; and it is well that some good has resulted from a rather unsatisfactory system of art patronage. Be the cause what it may, there is happily, no doubt about the fact. The number of paintings prepared for the yearly market is enormous when compared with the total of twenty or thirty years ago, and there is a steady increase. The Royal Academy's Exhibition does not suffice for half the number. Not including the displays of the two water-colour societies, there are supplemental collections of new paintings on sale every year at the British Institution, and at the Portland and Suffolk Street galleries. Besides which, the female artists have begun to organize a separate exhibition; and a still smaller section—the Hogarth Club—invited its friends early in the year to a præ-Raffaellite treat in a forlorn back room in Piccadilly, a chamber of horrors which was only to be approached through the premises of an unfriendly auctioneer. Arguing from the ascertained number of exhibited pictures, the yearly sum total of the works executed in England at this time must exceed all former

experience. And, what is more to the purpose, the great majority of their painters contrive to make a living by their profession. Mr. Ruskin, we believe, somewhere asserts broadly that no picture that has a spark of ability ever remains unsold. It is certain, indeed, that the majority of the daubs which cover the walls of our exhibition-rooms find a market. Who they are that buy the bad or indifferent pictures of each season has never been ascertained. It is still one of the rarest things in the world to see a modern picture in any house you visit. A few connoisseurs—emulative of Messrs. Vernon or Sheepshanks or Wells—are known to form collections of British art. Occasionally, an Art Union prize confronts you in a quarter where you least expect it. The dealers might give us some instructive statistics as to picture-buyers; but they, perhaps discreetly, keep their facts to themselves: and one learns nothing beyond some mysterious but well-omened hints that the best patrons of art are to be found at Birmingham or in the manufacturing cities of the north. It is something that such a taste has been implanted in a not ungenial soil. If it grows and strengthens, the consequences to art will be most important. The purchasers of pictures may be multiplied tenfold, or even a hundredfold, and the race of artists may increase even more rapidly than it does now with a good hope of the profession not being overstocked. It is true, that such a development will foster mere inanity and mediocrity in art, combined with rapidity of production. This evil, indeed, is already beginning to make itself felt. There are certain families—we had almost said firms—who meet the growing commercial demand for their pictures by an ever-increasing supply. The practised judge will pick out immediately their works, and will be as certain of the surname of the artist as he is profoundly indifferent to the initials. People talk of *a* Boddington or *a* Linnell, or *a* Danby in quite another sense to what they mean if they say *a* Dyce or *an* Eastlake. In the latter case, they imply that the work has the individual manner of a particular master: in the former, that it came out of such a studio or shop. Now we see no great harm in this. It is disappointing enough for those who are ever on the look-out for novelty, and it is especially disagreeable to critics who desire to say something about every picture without repeating *verbatim* what they have written for several successive years. But a certain portion of the public, in all trades, likes to patronize an established article, and eschews all needless novelties. If the mannered style has any substantive merits of its own it may be better, in some respects, to perpetuate it by tedious repetition than to fail altogether by

attempting a higher flight without adequate pinions. This, of course, is not high art. Nay, it may be very poor mechanical work. But for the purchaser at least it is better than no art at all. And it can never fairly be said to stand in the way of true living fresh inventive power. That is impossible. That which called the mechanical copyism into existence was a demand which there was no genuine artist ready to meet. Had no such demand arisen, these copyists would have gained their bread in other ways. And at any moment the introduction of a better supply would drive them from the field. They paint on sufferance, until the want which they fill is no longer felt or is otherwise satisfied. In fact, the existence of such phenomena proves our thesis, that art is still in the ascendant among us. It is a melancholy truth that in all departments of human thought and labour, mediocrity must preponderate. Greatness is egregious, in the original meaning of the word. The great authors or artists or generals of old won their reputations among a crowd of humbler rivals; and their fame is the measure of their superiority to the average contemporary standard of merit. Phidias, and Zeuxis, and Parrhasius were not the only sculptors or painters of their times, but the best. Our public picture-galleries contain few but master-pieces of the great schools of Europe. But what an infinity of rubbish, along with some real treasures, did Dr. Waagen bring to light in the private collections and country-houses of England! and in Italy itself the pseudo-works of the famous painters and their schools abound *ad nauseam*, to the bewilderment of the tourist. Now that there is a growing love for art in England the universal law will operate. There will be thousands of commonplace and inferior pictures painted to satisfy the demand. And it will be strange if some great artists do not rise above the level of their less-gifted contemporaries. The best hope of eliciting artistic eminence arises from the wideness of the area of the competition. In times when art was at a low ebb, many an inglorious Raffaele may have died unknown. But now, by one of the most certain laws of political economy, any rising ability is more sure of recognition and success than it would be under any such system of state protection for young artists as was gravely suggested by Mr. Ruskin when he lectured at Manchester in the Exhibition of 1857. We must make up our minds, therefore, to the patient endurance of a vast amount of mediocrity if only we may hope for some splendid exceptional works of genius. But the object of all lovers and critics of art should be to search for, and to encourage, when they find them, any signs of remarkable promise. It need not follow, because we

are tolerant of much that is undeserving of praise, that we should neglect or undervalue the rare promise of true excellence.

How far the inevitable disturbance and interruption of our social progress which must result from the war now raging in Italy will affect the prospects of art in this country, it is impossible as yet to say. But this is probably the last year for some time in which an uninterrupted progress will have to be recorded. We confess to very serious apprehensions for the future, even if happily our own country is to be spared the necessity of taking part in active hostilities. The present hopeful state of the Fine Arts in Europe at large is one of the happy results of the forty years' peace. A general war will retard—who knows for how long?—the operation of all the humanizing and civilizing influences which have been at work for the last quarter of a century. Already a critical contemporary has sounded the alarm in the cry, 'Riflemen, form! Painters, disperse!' Already the proposed Exhibition of 1861—premature and ill-advised as we have always thought the scheme—has been formally abandoned. And there are other unmistakeable signs that English minds and English purses will have for some years to come other interests than those of art to attend to and provide for. The Emperor of the French, indeed, is understood to have given public intimation that no excess of war expenditure will induce him to intermit the vast public works by which he has given a factitious encouragement to art and artists in enslaved France. His promise must be taken for what it is worth. We have no faith in his calculations or in his engagements. At home it is not the cessation of public works that we have to dread, but the drying up of the sources of the private patronage of art. And for this there is no remedy. We must wait till restored peace and prosperity give us new hopes of social improvement. Failing this, perhaps art must migrate westward, as old George Herbert prophesied of religion in his day, and find a temporary home beyond the Atlantic. And if our American cousins are preserved by their distance from the immediate disadvantages of war we shall not grudge them—what they need even more than we do—those blessings of peace which most effectually refine and embellish the life of man.

Meanwhile these thoughts and apprehensions will lead us to take a keener interest than ever in our own art-progress, as tested and registered by the principal exhibitions of 1859. The subject assumes a fresh importance when we remember that it may be long before circumstances may permit the Fine Arts in England to make any perceptible advance beyond the point already gained.

The tenour of our previous remarks will have indicated that we are not enthusiastic enough to require manifest proofs of progress in every successive year. All growth is gradual, and can only be judged of by its results at lengthened periods. It is often enough if no ground is lost, if former gains are assured, if the general average standard is well maintained. And there is special reason for congratulation if any former promise of excellence is fulfilled, and if any new aspirant gives tokens of uncommon power. If we cannot reckon the present year as one of exceptional promise, at least we may credit it with a satisfactory equality to most of its recent predecessors. Some, indeed, of the foremost among our living artists have this year sent nothing for exhibition. Others, engaged in more important works, are either not represented at all, or inadequately represented, by one or two easel pictures. More than one veteran shows unmistakeable signs of failing powers. In many of the younger men the critic sees with regret not only no improvement, but a steady downward progress: mannerisms confirmed, exaggerations becoming habitual, and less and less consistency of aim at a high standard. But here and there may be noticed more hopeful signs—a truer love of nature, a deeper sense of poetry and beauty, and a more careful and conscientious manipulation. Upon the whole, although there are one or two suspicious symptoms on which we shall offer a few remarks before concluding, the general result of the year's labour is very creditable to English art.

Beginning, as in duty bound, with the Exhibition of the Royal Academy, we briefly notice its most salient features. We turn first, and with the deepest interest of all, to the ideal art, whether sacred or secular, which the past year has produced. In the foremost rank we will place Mr. Dyce's 'Good Shepherd' (174). It is small in size, and cold and subdued in tone. Indeed, we doubt if it is more than a filling in of the actual sketch of the same subject which the artist exhibited two or three years ago. But what delicacy and refinement, and yet strength and severity of design; and what extreme and yet not excessive finish and elaboration! Our Lord's figure is perhaps somewhat more stiff than it might have been, and the countenance a shade too sternly sad; but the whole feeling is most devotional; and the right mean has been hit between naturalism and conventionalism. More truthful painting than that of the sheep, of the fold, of the flowers, and of the distant landscape is not to be seen within the walls of the Exhibition. Mr. Dyce contributes another small easel picture, 'Contentment' (437). It represents an old ferryman, sitting idly by his boat on the bank-side, waiting for a traveller to hail him. This, too, is admirable in

expression, and very forcibly painted; but we should have liked a warmer colouring. Nature, happily, is not wholly clothed in drab; and the painter of the young Titian of a year or two ago must not lose his eye for colour. Nevertheless, in virtue of these two works, and of the still finer fresco-paintings just finished for the altar-piece of the new church in Margaret Street, Mr. Dyce may be congratulated on having achieved a higher success than any other of his brother academicians.

It would have been wiser in Mr. Mulready to withhold his single picture (167). We could pardon its far-fetched and nearly unintelligible subject, but the drawing is manifestly defective, and the old charm of colour has almost disappeared. Mr. Herbert, on the other hand, sends a single study, which seems to us to be in advance of his former attainments. It is a half figure of St. Mary Magdalene (165), intended to form part of a group of the holy women crossing Calvary, as they approach the sepulchre with the spices at daybreak on the morning of the Resurrection. This is, both in sentiment and in execution, the most striking religious picture of the year. No archaism here, no conventional affectation; and, on the other hand, not a spark of meretricious modern sentimentalism. This saint has been a snare to many painters, and, as has been wittily said, she is too often represented with such dress and manner as she may have had 'before her conversion.' But here Mr. Herbert has thoroughly succeeded in idealizing in the pale, worn, modest beauty of her face the ravages of past penitence and present sorrow. The accessories are faultless. The long low walls of the nearer city, and the scantily-wooded slopes of the more distant limestone hills, look as if they had been conscientiously studied on the spot. And never has the first break of an eastern day been more faithfully given. The light has scarcely begun to pale the dark sky; the stars still shine, and a lamp may be seen gleaming faintly in an upper window of one of the distant houses far below.

The President of the Academy exhibits nothing, and Mr. Maclise contents himself with a single picture, 'The Poet to his Wife' (105), with a quotation from the 'Irish Melodies.' It is too pretty by half; a beautiful, but expressionless young girl, trying to look intense, in piquant morning dress, daintily trimming an arbour overgrown with passion-flowers. The poet, with hyacinthine locks, in a *degagé* costume, and holding a book, is vaguely gazing at her. What a waste here of admirable manipulative skill!—no story to tell, and yet such power to tell a story, if there were but the genius to conceive one: a perfect instrument, but no skill to use it. Three specimens by Mr. Cope show no variation from his usual style. In one (114) he parodies

rather happily the inimitable grace of the Della Seggiola attitude, in his picture of a fashionable young mother caressing her nestling infant; both in full gala dress. But his 'Cordelia' (193) is at least more ambitious. She is supposed to be hearing the intelligence of her sisters' ill-treatment of their father. Nothing surely was ever more artificial and constrained and vulgar. There is no feeling, no heart, in the whole composition. The princess's emotion is displayed by broad pantomime—clenched hands, and an immense teardrop on each cheek.

At any rate deficiency of expression is not the fault to be found with Mr. Millais' remarkable, not to say startling pictures. This gentleman is the sole representative this year of the leaders of the præ-Raffaellite school, Mr. Holman Hunt unfortunately exhibiting nothing. The crowd of visitors that constantly surrounds his pictures shows that his gorgeous colouring, and the intense expression of his works extort the observation of all beholders. And deservedly so. The whole gallery contains no more fascinating pictures than those which this all-but great painter has contributed. Fascinating—in its true sense: from which it is hard to tear oneself, however much one may hate and fear the charm. Take the first of Mr. Millais' three pictures—'The Vale of Rest' (15). The scene is a convent graveyard. Now convent cemeteries, as a matter of fact, are often gloomier places than this on the one hand, and on the other, their gloom is always lightened by more religious emblems of hope and faith than these dank and nodding headstones. But let that pass. Here we have a minute study from a home churchyard, crowded and uncared for, overgrown with coarse rank grass, while the dark mould that is thrown up reeks with corruption—crumbling bones and rioting earthworms. A nun, with sinewy arms, her robe and scapulary pinned back, stands in a half-dug grave, facing you as she laboriously, and somewhat awkwardly, throws out another spadeful. A second nun, crouched at the grave head, stares blankly, in a reverie of hopeless anguish, out of the picture. The group is a homily. 'Rest,' indeed; if these gaunt, withered, hopeless women found nothing within their convent-walls but disappointment and despair! It is life itself, of which, while still in its prime, these grim recluses are weary; and the grave, with all its loathsomeness unredeemed by any symbol of hope, is the only repose they long for. Do the two *immortelles* thrown aside symbolize that for such as these even hope does not reach beyond the tomb? Is it a polemical lesson that the artist would teach us, or is it only the old grotesque, unintelligible Teutonic humour showing itself—that which originated the ghastly Dance of Death, and which invests the popular

superstitions of northern nations with such an indescribable nameless horror? So in one of the most striking of modern designs, that fine German wood engraving which goes by the name of *Der Tod als Freund*, the highly wrought and touching pathos of the composition is marred by the grinning repulsiveness of the skeleton who tolls the old man's knell. Certainly the idea of these grave-digging nuns is not that suggested by the exquisite vocal quartett of Mendelssohn's from which the artist has borrowed both the name and the motto of his picture. In that composition the gifted musician has expressed, with strange subtlety of sound, the emotions inspired by the cloud-pageant of a glorious sunset—the sense of its splendour, its dreamy remoteness, its solemn calm, and its deep inherent sadness. In its way, Mr. Millais' evening sky in this picture, as seen beyond the terrace and high garden-wall which shut in the convent from the outer-world, seems to us scarcely less poetical than the musical thought which suggested it. The deep serenity of the glowing air-distance, the light-reflecting clouds, and the motionless tree-tops are most impressive. But, as a whole, the offensive elements of the picture predominate. The unnecessary ugliness of the women—their staring eyes and heavy brows and rouged cheeks—and the most unequal execution of certain parts, are positively provoking. It is truly lamentable to see a man to whom the highest success in art was once open wilfully taking the wrong road.

The same inconsistency is to be seen in Mr. Millais' other large work, which he calls 'Spring Time' (298); but here his eccentricities are pushed still further. The scene is a lawn separated by a dwarf stone wall from an orchard. Never was such a flaming background of diaper. The apple-trees meet and interlace in a network of vivid green, starred all over with the brightest blossoms; and their stems are half hidden by the tall grass, now nearly ready for the mowers. But when an orchard is in blossom the grass is not high enough for the scythe, nor are the dandelions in full seed. Kneeling, standing, and lying on the trim sward on this side of the wall are eight young girls of varying ages. They are resting, and drinking syllabub after a ramble. One is pouring out water, which another catches. Others sit pensively, or wreath flowers. One lies on her back in an audaciously ungainly attitude. All are grave and preoccupied. Not a soul utters a word. They seem to have been gathering wild flowers. Here there is a basket of wild hyacinths—there of primroses. Some of them have their long hair flowing loosely over their shoulders. A dark girl has dressed her head with lilac-blossom, and a blonde

neighbour has garlanded her fair tresses with the dark-blue gentianella. Here surely are the elements of a most attractive picture. Anything more graceful than an out-door *festa* of young girls could not be imagined. And there is a certain charm even about this startling composition. There is a certain languor—a Giorgionesque melancholy—which is not displeasing. There is something here of the strange, undefinable expression of pathos which lent an interest to the not very intelligible picture of the 'Autumn Leaves' by the same artist. What is his meaning? Does he intend to show that all joy has its dash of sadness? Are the cut flowers, and that ominous scythe, which leans on one side against the orchard wall, hints that 'all flesh is grass?' Or is it merely a wanton bravado—a study of polychromatic effects? The latter supposition has its supporters. Certainly such yellow and spotted dresses, such shocking improbabilities of colour, such blazing apple-blossoms, have never before been put upon canvas. There are not many men who could have the heart to paint eight young girls as so many clothed skeletons, every one of them ugly and ungraceful, with hard features, strained skins and in broad day with cheeks and lips painted as if for the footlights. Is there a Nemesis which has deprived Mr. Millais of the faculty of appreciating beauty? Were it not for an extraordinary power, which makes itself felt in spite of all these perversities, this picture would deserve nothing but contempt. Exactly the same faults reappear in Mr. Millais' third and least-important picture—'The love of James I. of Scotland' (482). The lady, of most elongated proportions, and dressed in a deep blue robe, without bonnet, but with earrings and bracelets, and holding a basket of flowers, raises her arm to the prison window to give a rose to the outstretched hand of her royal lover. What an incongruity of finish here between the blue dress and the scrambled wall! And is the lady in a hectic fever—or, shall it be uttered, has she been drinking? Mr. Millais' women are a libel on the sex.

We may take next in order the lesser luminaries of the pre-Raffaellite school. Mr. A. Hughes sends two pictures. The first (524), with a quotation from Chaucer, represents, we presume, the reconciliation of two lovers. They are embracing in a wood. Where in nature did Mr. Hughes ever see such a crude metallic green as he invariably gives us for his foliage? This is not the fresh pure green of the young leaves of the lime or the beech, but something as conventional in its way, and just as offensive, as the old 'brown tree' of the old school. The man here is pale, ghastly, and attenuated, as though he had come out prematurely from a fever-ward; and the lady is of the

præ-Raffaellite type of beauty. Need we say more? Even this picture yields in absurdity to the 'King's Orchard' (609). Here, again, we have a wilderness of blushing apple-blossoms—better, doubtless, than those in Mr. Millais' picture. But the group is preposterous—of hideous, large-headed, goggle-eyed children in stiff attitudes. What does it mean? The subject is doubtful, even after an honest effort to construe the obscure and ungrammatical motto from Robert Browning attached to it in the catalogue. One little girl, we suppose, is a queen, and that little boy in the dumps is a page. Art at any rate ought not to be a fatiguing enigma. Mr. Holiday has taken a subject from Froissart, which, though it does not explain itself to the eye—as surely a good picture ought to do without a commentary—yet is intelligible enough by the aid of a catalogue. One of the burgesses of Calais, half stripped, and with a halter round his neck, is bidding adieu to his wife before delivering himself up to Edward III. The mediæval fittings here are very carefully imagined; and there is much expression, though no beauty, in the figures. A picture of the same class, but less successful in its subject and treatment, is Mr. Egley's absurd but carefully painted scene of Cardinal Richelieu dancing a saraband before Anne of Austria (263). Who could make anything of such a subject? Were it a hundred times more clever it is still all labour lost. Mr. Windus leads the spasmodic section of the præ-Raffaellites, and his picture 'Too Late' (900), might have been painted in a madhouse. Who would dream of having such a picture in one's house, if one were paid for accepting it? There is a horrid reality in the fevered expression of the jilted girl, whose reason has left her. But such studies are only fit companions for Dr. Diamond's photographs of the insane in the portfolio of the psychologist. Only one picture, 'Back from Marston Moor' (930) bears the name of Mr. Wallis. A wounded Roundhead trooper has just ridden into the farmyard at sunset, to the surprise of his aged parents and the delight of his younger brothers. It is spirited, powerful, and full of thought and labour, but wholly unreal. Happily for mortal eyes the kindly atmosphere in nature's world so tones down the outlines and colours of things that there is some chance of harmony and repose. But there is none in Mr. Wallis's picture. The sentiment, however, is more healthy than in some of this painter's former works; but the manner is more than ever exaggerated. It is all emphasis and accent—every word dashed, as in a lady's letter. Each particular pebble on the ground excruciates the eye by its crude obtrusiveness, and each brick in the walls is tinted like a prism. The most

glorious sunset never exhibited such green depths of sky, or shed abroad such opal tints as Mr. Wallis has fancied here. Mr. Storey, in his 'Bride's Burial' (831), is a præ-Raffaellite, in virtue of his imitation of the worst faults of the school. It would be a charity to transport the ugly red-haired girl, with saucer eyes, who haunts the studios of this fraternity. Another luckless disciple is Mr. Stanhope, who reproduces, in 'Thoughts of the Past' (890), the stiffest attitudes and the rawest colouring of the sect.

We turn with a sense of relief to Mr. Egg, who shows proofs of real steady progress in a far healthier school. 'The Night before Naseby' (40) has been welcomed by some critics for its supposed political significance. Be this as it may, the work is very powerful though not very pleasing. The curtain of a tent is drawn aside, and you see within the great Puritan leader kneeling in prayer before an open Bible, which is propped up by his sword. The solitary candle scarcely illuminates the stern fanatical countenance: and the whole effect is highly melo-dramatic, the interior of the half-lighted tent contrasting strikingly with the bright moonlight outside. A dark bough intersects the moon's orb in a ghostly fashion; and in the distance the corslets of some troopers holding a prayer-meeting gleam in the moonlight. Is it intentional that the reflected light on Cromwell's head forms a kind of *nimbus*?

Mr. Ward is the *preux chevalier* of Marie Antoinette. He has made it his special province to illustrate the beautiful Queen's saddest of histories. This year he shows her in her prison, listening with fortitude and well-feigned indifference to the act of her accusation, as Fouquier Tinville insolently reads it out to her. It is a touching picture: but the easy vulgarity of the ruffian, as he sits swinging his legs on the table, is almost too repulsive. Mr. Phillip's southern experiences are embodied this year in a highly-coloured scene from a Spanish promenade, which he calls 'A Huff' (63). A ripe beauty, resplendent in white satin, is looking half disdainfully, half respectfully at a passing *majo*. The painting is extraordinarily careful, and the effect of colour gorgeous. The best and most natural figure, however, is that of the good-natured old padre, sitting under the shade of his enormous hat and smoking his cheroot. One looks with confidence for careful drawing and honest painting in Mr. Redgrave; and his 'Emigrant's last sight of Home' (218) is not in this sense disappointing. There is not, among all the accidents of modern English life, anything more fruitful in pathetic scenes than emigration, and we wonder it has not more often inspired our artists. Mr. Redgrave, in this

scholar-like picture, has painted the valley and the village which his emigrants are leaving most admirably, but his family group is more laboured than successful. The real parting is something very different from this: English peasants are never so demonstrative and operative in their sorrow. But this, overstrained as it is, is a thousand times more natural than Mr. Faed's artificial 'Sunday in the Backwoods' (310), in which an emigrant family is assembled before a Canadian log-hut to listen to a chapter from the Bible. There is no little skill in the composition, and there is some true feeling in the home-sick expression of the invalid girl; but, upon the whole, the picture is unreal and mawkish in sentiment.

No pictures are more difficult to criticise than those which, though they have good subject-matter and show competent technical skill, altogether fail to interest the mind or touch the heart. Such is Mr. Horsley's 'Milton dictating Samson Agonistes' (222). The thing is full of commendable details, but it has no life. The blind man sitting at his organ key-board—the comely wife acting as amanuensis—the attentive young Quaker—the view of Cripplegate and London Wall out of the window—all is admirably painstaking and accurate. But who cares to give it a second look? Of the same utterly uninteresting and un instructive kind are Mr. W. J. Grant's 'Duke of Monmouth and Lady Wentworth' (416), Mr. Marshall's 'John Howard visiting the Prisons of Italy' (936), and others far too numerous to mention. Mr. F. R. Pickersgill is even a worse offender in this way because he is more ambitious. His 'Warrior Poets of Italy' (82) aims at embodying a romantic conception in the unapproachable style of Giorgione, but the result is soul-less. Nor is his 'Delilah and Samson' (348) a whit better. And Mr. H. W. Pickersgill's 'Scene from Hamlet' (381) must be placed in the same class. Several degrees better is Mr. Goodall's spirited Venetian scene, 'Felice Ballarin reciting Tasso to the people of Chioggia' (329); for here there is at least the interest of a very clever typical representation of a possible scene of Italian life; and as such it is a very agreeable and profitable study. We cannot say as much for Mr. E. Crowe's forced and yet feeble picture 'Milton visiting Galileo in the Prison of the Inquisition' (569). There is not a spark of life or poetry in the composition. And still more literal and prosaic is the same artist's 'Roundhead' (921), where a Parliamentary gentleman of the Civil War is proving the sincerity of his political convictions by yielding his long hair to the barber's scissors.

We have far more sympathy with Mr. Brooks' 'First Patron'

(585), in which he shows us an old gentleman with his beautiful daughter visiting, as purchasers, a young artist's studio. At least this subject has a present human interest, and the painter has felt his work. This, too, is the merit of Mr. Thorburn's 'Sewing' (610)—a real sketch of home life, vigorously conceived, and boldly painted. Mr. Rossiter's 'Song of the Shirt' (883) is too painful a version of a kindred theme. 'Dividend Day at the Bank' (519), by Mr. Hicks, is scarcely a subject for art, and if it were the task is above its author's range. Its inspiration dates, we should think, from Mr. Frith's popular 'Derby Day' of last year. But the scene is less well chosen, and the incidents selected for illustration are deficient in humour and interest. It is of course impossible for reviewers to receive dividends, but we have heard that the white-headed old clerk is an admirable portrait. Mr. Barwell, in 'Parting Words' (950), has manfully essayed to depict some of the thousand and one emotions connected with a starting train from a railway terminus. It is a failure: but still it is an honest endeavour to catch the poetical side of a scene of every-day life that is never without its moral to a judicious observer.

Two companion pictures to works formerly exhibited, and both of which were favourably received by the public, must be noticed with general approval. Mr. Solomon's 'Not Guilty' (557) has the merits and demerits of his 'Waiting for the Verdict,' the latter perhaps predominating. Mr. H. O'Neill's 'Home Again—1858' (400), answers to his 'Eastward Ho' of the Indian mutiny. This strikes us as being full of incident and pathos, very well worked out and conscientiously studied.

We have overlooked Mr. Stone, who exhibits two pictures in his own manner. 'A little too late' (662) is an arch and smart French washerwoman receiving an awkward offer of marriage from a shy fisher-lad, while the accepted lover is hidden behind a door, and laughing at his rival. It is sprightly and clever and dashing, but it is all froth; and so is Mr. Stone's other picture (254), the burthen of which is two conventional and very stupid young women just beginning to quarrel. Here there is a great falling off from this artist's performance of last year.

Yet this purposeless style of art—a mere display of pretty faces—is healthy and instructive, compared with such fatuous imbecility as Mr. Goldie's 'Monk Felix' (380), from Longfellow's 'Golden Legend.' Here we are shown nothing but the back of the white-robed monk as he stands in a kind of extacy, with uplifted hands, gazing at the bird that sings from the tree above his head. This is surely the bathos of transcendentalism. We confess to thinking Dogberry a better subject than the

Monk Felix. Mr. Mark is humorous and observant in his attempt to depict the scene of the inimitable 'Charge to the Watch' (427). We have never seen it better done. But Shakspeare has not yet found his illustrator. Mr. Leslie, however, fails far more conspicuously in his Shakspearian scene of Hotspur and Lady Percy (152), nor is he much more successful in his Jeanie Deans (211), from the 'Heart of Mid Lothian.' But criticism may well spare the last works of a thoroughly amiable and accomplished painter, whose recent decease is a loss not only to the practice but to the literature of art. It is a pleasure to notice the promise of the two works which his son, Mr. G. D. Leslie, has contributed to the Exhibition.

There is a freshness and originality about two pictures by Mrs. J. B. Hay (13 and 173) which deserve attention. This lady has caught by no means unsuccessfully the external characteristics of one common type of the Tuscan peasant-boy, and she contrasts it with the open frankness of a fair English child. But her suggested inference is scarcely fair, and the enigma of the child of the south might perhaps be solved differently. The truthful delineation of the scenery of the Val d'Arno should not be overlooked in these interesting pictures.

A few religious pictures—and there are but few in the Exhibition—may next be noticed together. One of the best, strange to say, is Mr. Armitage's sketch for a fresco for a Roman Catholic church in London (792). This gentleman, whose style hitherto has been in marked contrast to his new one, has great reason for complaining of the injustice done to a very remarkable work by the Hanging Committee. The subject is St. Francis and his early followers receiving the sanction of Pope Innocent III. to the rules of their order. The style and treatment, which are severe and almost archaic, are evidently borrowed from the famous frescoes of the Basilica of St. Boniface at Munich. It is only fair to add, that, so far as the height of the drawing enables us to judge, the composition is quite equal to those which have gained such just fame for Hess and his associates.

Mr. Dobson's effeminate mannerism is too confirmed, we fear, for hope of much improvement. His 'Archery Practice of the Children of Judah' (429) is a mere vehicle for displaying his usual conventionalized oriental figures seen through a haze of sentimental devotional feeling. Far better, because redeemed by a gleam of natural simplicity, is his other picture, 'Der Rosenkranz' (216), a fresh, innocent young girl holding her string of beads. Mr. W. C. Thomas deserves encouragement for the thought, and a certain elevation of feeling, which he has shown in his 'Harvest-Time' (872), where our Lord's

figure is more dignified than usual in pictures of this class. There is promise, also, in Mr. W. H. O'Connor's picture from Dante's *Paradiso* (495), but he must beware of affectation.

It is simple charity to draw a veil over most of the ordinary attempts at distinctively sacred subjects in the Exhibition. But in a few there is more to complain of than mere stupidity and feebleness. There is rather an increase, we think, in a class of serious pictures which may be better described as 'truly pious' than sacred. Such is Mr. Rankley's '*Farewell Sermon*' (271), a thoroughly ridiculous composition, in which a clergyman is supposed to be writing a sermon late on a moonlight night, his wife sitting beside him, and the room encumbered with all his boxes and trunks packed up for a move. The sheet before him is inscribed with an unintelligible text, and, to be in keeping, the shade of the lamp is adorned with the emblem of the Holy Dove! Is it possible that there is a public that will purchase such parodies of art as this for the sake of their false sentiment? We fear the answer to this question must be in the affirmative; for there are many more pictures than we like to see evidently prepared for the religious market, works without a spark of artistic merit, but appealing to an uncritical taste by such subjects as family prayers, Bible-reading, Sunday-school singing, and the like.

Perhaps it is not much to be wondered at, that, in the absence of a genuine school of sacred art, these wretched substitutes satisfying as they do to some extent a natural and inevitable demand, have gained a temporary popularity. But it may be hoped that we have at last seen the dawn of better things. There are many signs that the narrow-minded prejudices of Exeter Hall are less influential than they once were, and that the breach between the Fine Arts and the Church of England is nearly healed. It is a significant circumstance that the beautiful church in Margaret Street, adorned with Mr. Dyce's frescoes, has received the sanction of the ecclesiastical authorities as well as the approbation of general opinion. Those noble specimens of sacred painting of the highest order are destined, we hope, to work a revolution in religious art among us. We shall no longer be satisfied with obscure allegory, with the mere representation of a parable, or with timid historical scenes, when the great objective verities of the Christian faith are once more proposed to our painters for the highest exercise of their pencil. Mr. Dyce has shown us that the Nativity, the Crucifixion, and the Exaltation of our Incarnate Redeemer—those old, and, as some have thought, worn-out subjects—admit of new illustrations and fresh interpretations, and profound

applications, when the painter is allowed to resume his ancient office by the preacher's side. Those, after all, are the subjects which are best calculated to inspire the artist; they are perennial and inexhaustible, for they are coextensive with the whole compass and the inmost depths of our human nature. If any one would know what not only art but religion itself has lost through that long alienation which is now, as we hope, at an end, we can refer to a curious but convincing illustration. The Christian Knowledge Society—which may be taken as a fair sample of moderate English religionism—publishes for the use of children and the poor a series of coloured prints called ‘The Life of our Blessed Saviour.’ Experience is better than theory, and it has doubtless been found that religious pictures of some sort or other are a necessity at least for the young and the unlearned. What inconceivably degraded art this powerful Society thinks it safe to patronize we could never make our readers comprehend by mere description. It must be seen to be believed. But now our thesis is to prove that religion suffers as well as art from their long divorce. We scarcely expect to be credited when we declare that out of ‘The Life of our Blessed Saviour’ almost every most important action is either obscured or eliminated altogether. Prominence is given to subsidiary scenes; or the attention is concentrated upon some group of bystanders or spectators rather than upon the main object. The chief aim, indeed, of the compilers seems to have been to avoid depicting our Saviour's Humanity at all. Thus, in the ‘Betrayal,’ there is a bustling foreground of Judas and his company, while the Betrayed One is in the indistinguishable distance. The Nativity, as such, does not occur at all; and—almost more shameful still—the Crucifixion is evaded by the device of a treatment in which is shown nothing but the group at the cross's foot. It is not considered dangerous therefore, we presume, to behold the mourners or the stem of the fatal tree round which they cluster; but to raise one's eyes to the cross itself is inadmissible. Positively the top of this picture cuts off the cross altogether just above the heads of the group below! Is it too much to say that religion itself suffers by such ministration of art as this? But the days of such folly as this are numbered; and with less timidity and less suspicion on the one side, and more loyalty on the other, art will soon become once more the trusted handmaid of the Church.

Diverging now to a widely different department, we must assign to Mr. G. H. Thomas no small praise for success in a difficult task imposed upon him by royal command. He has contrived to paint the review in the Champ de Mars (478), when

the Queen visited Paris, in a very spirited and effective way. The view is taken from near the balcony whence the royal party witnessed the spectacle; and it is surprising how cleverly the imposing masses and long lines of troops are marshalled on the canvas. The Zouaves are in the act of passing the staff at the double. Mr. Jones's 'Battle of Inkermann' (876), on the other hand, is, at least to lay eyes, as unsatisfactory as most pieces of the kind. This gentleman, however, contributes almost the only purely classical subject to the Exhibition, in his 'Helen, Castor, and Pollux' (136). We wish we could commend the execution as much as the choice of his topic. It would be a curious matter of speculation to determine what recent change of public opinion has driven the old Pagan mythology entirely out of the field of art. For ourselves, we regret the result, and will give our reasons when we come to sum up the conclusions from the year's display of art. One other exhibitor, Mr. Agneni, in two designs for fresco (1056 and 1166), has ventured upon the 'Rape of Europa' and some classical Personifications. They are worth looking at, as showing a promising aptitude for this kind of design.

We pass on to the consideration of the more remarkable portraits of the year. There is no reason that this department of art should be viewed, as it often is, with some kind of contempt. It may be granted that it is tiresome enough to be called upon to look at the prosaic renderings of dozens of mean and uninteresting faces; but it is as much the painter's fault as the sitter's that the pictures are not worth looking at. The giants of ancient art could idealize the most homely countenances; and it is the function and province of the painter to discover and to perpetuate what is the essence of a man's likeness—not merely what he is, but what he might be and perhaps will be. Who has not observed with awe the forgotten resemblances, the new expressions, the strange refinement and we might almost say glorification, which the calm of death develops in the lineaments of the departed—when human passion is stilled for ever, and, as the past and actual fade away, the possible and future dawns upon the spectator? Some such insight ought to be the prerogative of the true artist. And when once a painter has so seized the reality of his sitter's countenance, the portrait immediately takes rank among the highest creations of art, and, as we said, the most unimportant countenance is endued with immortality. Happily this is beginning to be more and more understood and acted upon. Without servilely imitating the manner of Holbein or of Titian or of Reynolds—as some would have them do—there

are artists who honestly try to do in their own way, with equal intensity and truth, what those great painters achieved before them. And nothing is more strange, when it is remembered how warmly any such really good portrait is welcomed, than that so many painters remain content with their own worn-out traditions and obsolete properties.

We know no portrait of the season that altogether equals Mr. Knight's likeness of Mr. Lane, the engraver (87). It is one which rivets itself on the mind, and continually recurs to the memory. All is good—the attitude, the expression, and the technical rendering. Very different in style, but very masterly, is the calm, cold, full face which Mr. G. F. Watts exhibits under the name of 'Isabella' (438). This is the only work this year of an artist from whom much is expected. It might, perhaps, have been deepened in expression with advantage. Mr. Richmond is unequal, nor do his oil paintings ever seem to us to rival in expression and suggestiveness the admirable crayon sketches by which he first became famous. His portrait of the Bishop of Salisbury is anything but complimentary to the prelate, except in the most superficial outward resemblance. Very far better is his portrait of the Dean of Westminster (510). Without flattery, he has given pre-eminence to the intellectual elements of a remarkable countenance. The same may be said of Dr. Wordsworth's likeness (723); and there are other excellent portraits from the same pencil that might be enumerated. Take, for instance, the life-like head of Sir F. Rogers. Mr. Richmond must beware of the somewhat unnatural tone of colour which he is apt to give to his flesh. The success of his piquant portrait of Mrs. Markham in last year's Exhibition has tempted Mr. F. Grant to repeat the experiment under less favourable circumstances in his 'Mrs. Gaskell' (183). He is more happy in his careful likeness of the Premier (236). We can particularize none of Mr. Thorburn's contributions with special praise. This artist is not the only one that needs the hint that it is not advisable to parody some well-known 'Holy Family' in every portrait-group of a father, mother, and child. But Mr. Frith—intermitting his more usual style—challenges attention this year by a striking portrait of Mr. Charles Dickens represented as writing in his study. The person would scarcely be identified, we think, with Ary Scheffer's well-remembered portrait, but it is very ably painted. The attitude, costume, and *ton* of the sitter are highly characteristic. Mr. Boxall is far below his average standard in a peculiarly vulgar full-length of the Prince Consort (81), in the character and costume of the Master of the Trinity House, painted for

that corporation. Has the *genius loci* debased his perceptions, or was a howling tempest in the background *de rigueur* with the Elder Brethren? This is retrogression in the matter of the proprieties in art. Mr. Eddis is content with conforming to the fashion of the day, while he might, if he chose, do much to improve it. Thus, in a large full-length of the Lord Chancellor (16), we find the old properties—a column and red curtain. His portrait of Sir Harry Jones (322) seems to us very good indeed, but it plainly might easily have been much better, with more boldness on the part of the painter. There is no lack of able and pleasing artists, who seem to fail but by a very little from much more assured success. Such are Mr. Buckner, as represented by his graceful Countess della Torre (95); Mr. H. W. Phillips, who has painted—somewhat disagreeably—the well-known countenance of the Dean of St. Paul's (22); Mr. Dickinson, whose picture of the Rev. F. D. Maurice (492) will arrest general attention; and Mr. Weigall, who shows spirit in borrowing from the inimitable Nelly O'Brien of Lord Hertford's collection the attitude of one of his lady-sitters. Mr. Phillip reaches a higher range in the portrait of his brother associate, Mr. Egg (405): and in the picture of Mr. James Wilson, M.P. (194), Sir J. W. Gordon has produced a thoroughly startling likeness, in which, however, the photographic accuracy is scarcely consistent with the highest view of the portrait-painter's mission. The same criticism must be passed on the vulgar literalism of the enamel full-length, by Mr. Clothier, of Mr. Mudie, the eminent librarian (818).

In this place, as the greatest possible contrast to the last-mentioned works, let us name with much praise Mr. Leighton's very thoughtful idealization, in three different points of view, of the beautiful Italian head of his Roman model. The power that is shown in these studies revives the hopes which this young painter's first work, two or three years ago, excited in the public mind. With these should be compared, in Mr. E. Williams's 'Giacinta' (554), an Italian model, not idealized—the letter without the spirit.

The *paysagistes* will form the next class for our examination, and Mr. Clarkson Stanfield has a prescriptive right to head the company. This artist's works will be singled out at once from the crowded walls. His manner is confirmed, but it has lost none of its charm. Perhaps the freshest of his three pictures this year is his 'Maltese Xebec on shore, with Ischia in the distance' (237). One could not have a pleasanter object than this as a Mediterranean reminiscence. There are some sterling marine pictures this year by other hands which should not be

overlooked. For instance, Mr. Creswick has given a short broken sea very faithfully in his 'On Shore' (335), and Mr. Hook's 'Luff, Boy' (369), is a capital thought capitally rendered. An old sailor is giving his two grandsons a practical lesson in navigation far out at sea in his fishing-boat, trimming the sail while the younger lad is at the helm. This picture is very deservedly a great favourite, as being a bit of real life heartily imagined. More commonplace, but by no means unsuccessful, is Mr. E. W. Cooke's 'Squall off Harlingen' (388), with the Dutch 'peon' running for the port. But the most ambitious sea-piece is Mr. F. R. Lee's 'Bay of Biscay' (511), an awful gulf of green waves, literally 'the trough of the sea,' with heavy drifting masses of cloud overhead, and a speck of a sail on the far horizon. It is impressive, and has the stamp of reality: the artist, by affixing a date, intimates that it is his recollection of a scene he actually witnessed.

From Mr. J. F. Lewis we have a doubtless veracious, but uninteresting Egyptian scene (135), a travelling party with their camels, waiting for the ferry-boat on the Nile bank. This is his solitary contribution. Mr. Hering has caught a true Venetian effect in his 'Returning from Torcello' (543). The reflection on the water is capital. In his 'Lago Maggiore' (591), the colour seems scarcely brilliant enough for the splendid morning he is depicting. In curious contrast to this scene is Mr. Bossoli's 'Smolnoi Monastery' (1026), at St. Petersburg, on the banks of the Neva; a forbidding pile, bristling with domes, and bathed in a weird moonlight. It is the novelty of the scene, however, rather than the pictorial merit of the piece that arrests us. Returning to Italy, Mr. Barnard has ventured with much success on an Alpine effect, never forgotten by one who has ever seen it—the last rays of the setting sun on Monte Rosa (1033). But the most singular landscape is Mr. J. Brett's minute bird's-eye view from the same neighbourhood, the 'Val d'Aosta' (908). It is almost as accurate and full as a photograph, with the addition of colour. One is tempted to examine it with a microscope, in order to develop new minutiae. It is a new application of art, and may claim the merit of having most truthfully represented the facts of the original scene; but of the poetry of Italian landscape there is little or none.

On the other hand, this is the main charm of Mr. C. P. Knight's 'Barley Harvest on the Welsh Coast' (190). It is a pretty but ordinary scene, to which its artistic treatment lends additional beauty. Nothing could be more healthy and vigorous. But do the Welsh reapers cut their barley with a sickle? With this should be compared Mr. Whaite's 'Barley Harvest' (390),

a very fresh and painstaking effort. Would that there were as much truth to nature in Mr. Witherington's able but dull and conventional works. What an overwrought effect of green foliage, for example, in his 'Crossing the Brook' (228)! He is better in his pretty 'Wharfedale' (377), from near Bolton Abbey. It is impossible not to admire the facility and skilful artistic rendering of Mr. Boddington's 'Source of the Lake' (477), under an evening effect; and we may couple with it Mr. W. Linnell's richly-coloured 'Harvest' (661). Mr. J. Danby is the most successful exhibitor of his name in the striking 'Capture of Mediterranean Pirates' (649), where the steamer and its smoke are very effectively and poetically handled. Mr. Creswick is below his reputation in his 'Coming Summer' (96).

Mr. Abraham Cooper has no work that claims special notice: and Sir E. Landseer shows signs of failing powers. Not, indeed, in his 'Doubtful Crumbs' (138), in which a sharp terrier watches for the crumbs that he may steal from a stately mastiff. Here is the old power—the strange faculty of interpreting the riddle of brute nature by human analogies. And the 'Prize Calf' (203) is nearly perfect as a piece of animal painting, with no further aim than imitation. But the large canvas (175), with an almost unintelligible motto about the escape of the deer from its pursuers Bran and Oscar, is a sad falling off. The deer is swimming for life, and the two dogs are plainly worsted. There are here also many of the old touches, but the rolling mist and the surging water are left far too much for the spectator's imagination. And there is another work, bearing the same honoured name, which is simply inexplicable. 'A kind Star' (426) represents a wounded doe comforted by a gigantic angelic figure, who descends from the sky, bearing a radiant star upon her forehead, and clasps with both hands the head of the dying animal. Is it possible that this great artist has so long accustomed himself to refine and spiritualize brute nature, that he has come at last almost to obscure to his own mind the distinction between 'the spirit of man that goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast that goeth downward to the earth?' Nor are the technical qualities of this revolting work at all creditable.

Mr. David Roberts has no rival as yet in his architectural painting. He has solved a very difficult problem successfully in giving a not inadequate effect of area in his 'Interior of St. Mark's at Venice' (420). But he has exaggerated—as is perhaps unavoidable—not only the colouring, but the action in the rich mosaics of the domes and walls. There is also another Venetian church of his, the well-known white marble 'Santa Maria della Salute' (160). But he should have taken his view

from a more distant point on the other side of the canal. Half the witchery of this building is its reflection in the tremulous water.

Among miscellaneous pictures we may mention the 'Traveller's Joy' (621), by Miss A. F. Mutrie, as one of the very best fruit or flower pieces. Mr. W. W. Deane has a picturesque sketch of 'St. Sauveur, Caen' (846). 'Festa Day at Naples' (850), by Mr. J. G. Scheffer, is full of local colour, and happily composed. Mr. Schloesser gives us just such a picture as may be seen in any continental exhibition, in his *Saltimbanques* (489) counting and quarrelling over their gains. The contrasts of a stroller's life are always a favourite subject with one class of artists. Mr. P. H. Calderon has thrown unusual force and pathos into a picture of this kind. He has taken for his subject (634) some French peasants recognizing their stolen child in the spangled 'Juliet Araminta' of a travelling company. The action and emotions proper to the scene are very well displayed. Finally we would note Mr. J. Campbell's 'Our Village Clockmaker solving a Problem' (14), as perhaps the most able specimen of minute *genre* painting in the Exhibition. It is to be hoped that this gentleman, having found his proper style, will stick to it. He is not very likely to be surpassed in it. There are many other average pictures which might claim a passing notice—but we forbear. It is enough to have singled out the more conspicuous works of each class. Upon the miniatures we do not enter, as there seems to be nothing of remarkable interest or novelty. Nor do the engravings, which this year have the Octagon Room to themselves, challenge any remark. They are not below the average standard, but they do not exceed it.

Reserving the sculpture and architecture of the year till the pictorial art has been fully considered, we here leave for a time the Royal Academy and betake ourselves to the gallery of the Old Society of Painters in Water Colours. The display here is not altogether encouraging. Water-colour painting is ruining itself by exceeding its true province and emulating the proper characteristics of oil-treatment. Mr. David Cox, whose decease has just been announced, was almost the only survivor of the older and better school. There are several works here by this skilful artist, unimportant in themselves, but valuable as examples of his breadth and dash of style. In the French gallery, we may observe, Mr. Gambart has assembled a very large collection of this veteran artist's works. The idea is a very good one, and will probably be followed up in future years by the illustration of the special style of other artists. The hint is borrowed from the practice of the directors of the Exhibition

of the Old Masters at the British Institution, who, this year, we are glad to see, have made a special collection of the works of Gainsborough. Mr. D. Cox, jun., follows in his father's steps but with a long interval. His best work is (171) his 'Morning View of the Caernarvonshire Mountains.' We miss Mr. Can Haag this year altogether. It is to be hoped that he has been gathering from some new field the materials which will serve him in as good stead next year as the Tyrol has done hitherto. Nothing is more surprising than the want of enterprise among most of our landscape painters. Sicily, Madeira, and the Canaries, all easily reached, and all nearly unknown, would afford a thousand novel and beautiful effects of tropical colour and light for the artist's pencil. Mr. Tayler, the President of the Society, has two or three landscapes, none of them remarkable: and his most ambitious work, 'Scotch Prisoners taken at a Conventicle' (72), must be reckoned a failure.

Mr. Hunt's fruit and flowers will be eagerly looked for and will more than repay the search. They are perfect *genre* of colour. His 'Bird's Nest and Primroses' (203) is inimitable. Elsewhere he gives us a 'Pine-apple and Grapes' (261), a 'Quince' (271), and a complete dessert (267)—peaches, raspberries, and grapes, laid out on ivy leaves and nestling in moss—of which we can only say, that their bloom and their tints come into competition with nature itself. Two other little pieces, painted (it is recorded) expressly for Mr. Ruskin, are the very glorification of *genre*. The subjects are some sea-shells and an oyster-shell and onion. They are marvels of delicate colour and elaborate manipulation.

Perhaps the most poetically-conceived landscape in the room is Mr. Newton's 'First Approach of Winter' (181). The scene is from Inverness-shire, and the artist has given with great force and truth the effect of the first snow of the advancing winter. This has been well studied on the spot, at a time when most sketchers have gone southward like the swallow to more genial latitudes. There is great merit, also, in Mr. Turner's Argyllshire view (48) of Ben Cruachan, with its head in rolling mist. And Mr. Naftel, in his 'Ben Lomond' (44), has redeemed the promise of former years. Mr. S. P. Jackson aims at too much in his 'Abandoned Ship' (43); but there is some solemnity of thought in his 'Midnight on the Atlantic' (1), and his 'Merchantman on a Lee Shore' (180) is poetically conceived.

In Mr. Callow's works there are facility and versatility rather than any higher qualities. His best work is the 'Homeward Bound' (246), in which there is an effective contrast between the restless tossing steam-tug and the stately ship it is taking in

tow. We note, also, that this gentleman's architectural sketches are faithful and clever. 'The Valley of Chamouni' (92), by Mr. J. D. Harding, is masterly in its own style. And we must single out for commendation Mr. Smith's 'Chillon' (91), and especially his Cambrian landscape, 'Rain on the Hills' (23), in which there is an honest fidelity to nature. Were we to mention all the average pictures of this Society, it would be little more than a catalogue of names. His admirers will value Mr. Branwhite's good Welsh landscape (9). Messrs. Richardson and Gastineau sustain their respective reputations and no more. The Messrs. Fripp are more insipid than usual. But 'Bisham Abbey' (221), by Mr. George Fripp, is a characteristic bit of Thames landscape.

Architecture has always been a favourite study of water-colourists. In this department Mr. Read has been very successful in the famous Tabernacle or Sakraments-Haus, in the splendid Gothic church of St. Lawrence, Nuremberg. And his interior of St. Jacques, Antwerp, is ably given. Mr. E. A. Goodall has found an unhacknied and very picturesque subject for his pencil in the Market Place at Segovia (151); and the same gentleman has not been deterred by the many difficulties which his view of that sacred shrine of art, the 'Lower Church of St. Francis, at Assisi' (49) must have presented. Some charming North-German architectural scraps are furnished by Mr. J. Burgess, jun.

More ambitious compositions are somewhat out of place in water colours, but there are some artists who affect them. Mr. Gilbert is one of them. He is never to our mind, however, as an illustrator of Shakspeare. We admit his skilful facility. Often he is very felicitous in his use of costume and his embodiments of character. But he is never quite equal to the subject. Thus, his 'Sir Andrew Aguecheek's Challenge' (125) teaches one nothing, and fails to impress itself on the memory; and the 'Banquet at Lucentio's House' (132) is equally uninteresting and indistinctive. His better qualities are apparent in the spirited sketch of a Trumpeter (16): but this, after all, is more a trick of hand than anything else.

Miss M. Gillies continues to devote herself entirely to works of sentiment. Her compositions are never without affectation, though her intentions are good. But art should have its sunny side sometimes. Too often this lady's drawing and manipulation are defective. It is so in her 'Highland Emigrant's last look at Loch Lomond' (20). 'The Father and Daughter' (51) is not without tenderness; and her 'Young Mother' (230) only misses a more considerable success by its being overwrought in every sense. The 'Physician's Visit' (242) is in every way distressing.

Mr. Nash's pictures, when he attempts anything beyond architectural or furniture pieces, are, for the most part, dreary compositions. This is the case with his scene of the surprise by the tide from the 'Antiquary' (33), and with his two illustrations of 'Don Quixote,' the latter of which (296), representing the knight's adventure with the strolling company, is a subject not possible to be expressed by the pencil in a satisfactory manner. He could not but fail in so ill-chosen a task. His 'Lay of the Last Minstrel' (42) is only meritorious, as showing a picturesquely-conceived group in the oriel of a stately old gallery, such as may be seen at Haddon or Bramshill. But his figures are always the merest puppets. Mr. Stephanoff attempts the style of Wilkie in his 'Home' (110), but is crude and forced. His 'Fruit-woman' (199) is an exaggeration. The careful and expressive 'Widow of Wôhlm' (128), by Mr. F. W. Burton, is much more commendable. She is at prayer in church kneeling at her prie-dieu, with her child beside her. The widow's devotion and the child's playful, but still rather awed, inattention are well contrasted, and the painting is firm and powerful. There are the same merits in Mr. Burton's 'German Fruit-girl' (266); and his 'Tyrolese Boys trapping Birds' (282) is a pretty sketch.

We like Mr. Duncan's 'Life-Boat' (22) for its vigour and spirit; and there is much truth and movement in his 'Wreckers (31) on the coast of South Wales.' We cannot compliment Miss E. Sharpe on her ideal of Hebe (111). In fact, she has translated the cup-bearer of the gods into the vulgar actuality of a barmaid amongst mortals. It would be unfair to deny Mr. Topham the credit of much clever design in his large picture of 'The Sizar and Ballad Singer' (140); but it is thrown away. It is only by the aid of the long extract from Forster's 'Life of Goldsmith' that one can interpret the subject; and then it is felt to be neither very interesting nor very true to nature. There should be some unity of purpose, some definite point of concentrated interest, in a scene that is chosen for this kind of illustration. Here the attention is divided between the group listening to the ballad-singer, and the supposed emotions of the shrinking author of the song. Mr. J. D. Harding is at home in the broken scenery of his 'Park' (136), and there is some good woodland by Mr. Davidson (13). The 'Athole Forest from Loch Vach' (64), by Mr. W. Evans, is a striking scene.

Of Mr. Hunt's unrivalled fruit we have already spoken. Among the other artists who have chosen the same class of subjects, Mr. V. Bartholomew is the only one who calls for special notice.

The younger Society of Water Colourists has undoubtedly this year a more attractive exhibition, as well as a considerably larger one, than its rival. Before entering upon its criticism, we may express our hope, *en passant*, that the two Societies will be merged into one so soon as new quarters, sufficiently large for the reception of the joint collections, shall have been assigned to them in the proposed palace of art at Burlington House. There is no reason, except want of space, for the separation of the water colourists into two camps: and we have never been able to understand why this beautiful and eminently English style of art should be excluded from the Royal Academy. This too, perhaps, will be remedied. Two very conspicuous pictures arrest the eye in the New Society's gallery. Mr. Corbould's 'Dream of Fair Women' (212) occupies the post of honour: and it deserves it, if scale and elaboration alone are to be taken into account. That so much brilliancy, such bright effects of colour, such depth of expression, can be produced at all in this method of painting is indeed surprising. But we think it a mistake. Water colours, as treated by those who have best known their proper capacity, are not laid on in a thick impasto. It is natural enough that clever artists should force a process, of which they have acquired so great a mastery, beyond its natural limits, but it is very much to be regretted. Allowing, therefore, very high praise to Mr. Corbould for his mechanical success in this picture, we cannot acquit it of great artistic faults. And we are still more at issue with him for his choice of subject. It is a mistake, to begin with, to have attempted so to materialize the laureate's vision. Tennyson's 'Dream' is a real dream, incoherent and inconsequential, full of contrasts and anachronisms. As translated into hard fact and form in Mr. Corbould's canvas, all becomes unnatural and unreasonable. The poet, moreover, not only describes what he supposed himself to see, but his own emotions in viewing it. The painter, however, must perforce confine himself to the objective half of the vision. The result is a scene quite unintelligible in itself, and quite unsatisfactory when explained. The theatre is a mossy forest, in the midst of which reclines Cleopatra on her 'crimson scarf,' while around and behind her stand the other fair women of the 'Dream.' The artist has been careful to borrow all the hints and touches which the poet has crowded into his ornate word-painting. But it seems to us that, generally speaking, his supplemental facts, when a deficiency has to be supplied, are not happy. Nor is he always successful when working out the *data* of the poem. For example, the horrible development in the picture of the 'dragon eyes of anger'd Eleanor,' by means of crude dashes of white

paint, is a most vulgar and prosaic expedient. In fact, all the heroines, though pretty enough as models, are insipid and melodramatic to the highest degree; while the voluptuous attitude and expression of the central figure, the Queen of Egypt, is needlessly exaggerated.

Opposite to this picture is one scarcely less resplendent or less sensuous, 'The Peri' (73), by Mr. Warren, the President of the Society. The gate of paradise is half open, and reveals a glimpse of a sort of stalactitic cavern, with abundant tropical plants, and stars hung in festoons, after the fashion of Vauxhall Gardens or Cremorne. This, we presume, is Mr. Warren's notion of Eden. The Peri, an inane kind of beauty, stands glumly by the gate, looking downwards with a very ambiguous expression. Of course this subject can be made very attractive in a certain way. A beautiful damsel, who does not pretend to angelical perfection, with fairy-like dress, bright wings, and jewels *ad libitum*, makes a very agreeable centre to a blaze of all the accessories of luxurious oriental scene-painting. But this kind of art must be denounced as essentially unreal, meretricious, and enervating. Mr. Warren attempts another style in his 'Flight into Egypt' (233). It is a mere landscape, and an uninteresting one: the figures are no more to it than they would be in a Claude or a Poussin. Far better is his 'Great Pyramid' (298). Here we have really a striking scene. The summit still glows against the intensely green sky, though the sun has already set; while round its base the gloom and mists of night are fast thickening.

Mr. Philp is in his usual force with admirable bits of Devonshire and Cornish coast scenery. We like best, on the whole, his drawings from Clovelly; but his 'Newlyn, Mount's Bay, Cornwall' (358), is very ably done, with the atmospheric effect thoroughly appreciated. Mr. S. Cook may be compared with him, as he traverses with equal skill and fidelity very nearly the same sketching-ground. In the 'Vale of Dolwydellan' (258) he quits the south-western counties for North Wales, and enters into competition with those marvellous photographs by which Mr. Fenton has illustrated that scenery. The fog clearing off in this gentleman's 'Early Summer Morning' (7) is admirable, and the cold tone is very true to nature. To Mr. Vacher we owe a number of Italian landscapes of great merit. For instance, the ruined castle, belonging to the Colonnas, in the Roman Campagna (8), is very forcible; and another Campagna view (34), taken from the Anio, has seized one of those gleams of evening light which it would be so difficult to believe possible if one had never seen them. He is less successful in his scraps from the Italian lakes; but we note a happy sketch of life and manners

in his 'Osteria' (108). His most ambitious work, the 'Festival in the Grand Canal at Venice' (225), does not satisfy us. It is not easy to reproduce the Venice of the sixteenth century, and Mr. Vacher has lost himself in the stage-properties of pageantry and costume. He had better have given us the Ca d'Oro in its present condition. There is a touching beauty in the Venice of to-day which the real artist should not wish to exchange for any imaginary vision of former grandeur.

What could Mr. Weigall, or any one else, make of such a subject as 'The Farmer's Boy' (14), even with the aid of Bloomfield's stupid muse, from which he borrows a motto? Mr. Pidgeon has contrived—no easy task—to divest the 'Wetterhorn' (17) of almost all its sublimity; and his other Swiss views are mediocre. We congratulate Mr. McKewan on the new field he has opened to himself by visiting Asia Minor. His sketches, so far out of the beaten track, will be looked at with great interest. We like especially his 'Aqueduct across the Meles' (18), and his 'Mahomedan Cemetery, Smyrna' (83). What can be more solemn than the cypress-gloom in the latter picture? Some of his Cumbrian pictures, on the other hand, are but commonplace.

Mr. E. G. Warren, the son of the President, has greatly improved. His 'In the Fields' (78), for instance, is a most spirited piece of leafage. How good the beech-trees! The colour of the foliage is, however, almost too artificially contrasted. Still more intricate is the maze of trees depicted in his 'Lost in the Woods' (88). It is the very heart of a Kentish or Sussex wood. In the 'Avenue, Evelyn Woods' (228), Mr. Warren's most important picture, his special gift of almost photographing sylvan minutiae is more than ever apparent. We consider this picture a work of remarkable skill, as well as of a patient industry that is beyond praise. Every bough and leaf, every stain on the trunks, every glancing ray of mottled light, seems to be given with accuracy and precision, and yet without hardness or stiffness. In another picture (246) he tries to add to his woodland a historical interest, by imagining the presence of Robin Hood and his outlaws in Sherwood forest. The result is at best a *tableau*, such as might be got up in a revival at the Princess's Theatre. The figures, in fact, utterly vulgarize the forest. Mr. Warren should stick to his trees.

Animal life is understood and depicted by no one better than by Mr. Harrison Weir. His etchings, however, are, upon the whole, more spirited than his paintings. His 'Leisure Hour at the Smithy' (36) is exceedingly clever; but there is too much crowded into one piece. The old bay cart-horse waiting to be

shod is excellent, but there are too many other live creatures introduced. The flight of pigeons clustering round is, however, capital. 'Woodcock—Hit!' (70) is another perfect morceau by this skilful draughtsman. 'Roslyn Chapel' (41), by Mr. Chase, is poetically rendered. We like, also, his little solitary charity girl kneeling just within the door of Barnes church (97). In 'Melrose Abbey by Moonlight' (145) there is the fault that many architectural details which could only be seen by broad day are shown as visible at night. In fact, the ruin was doubtless drawn by day, and the moonlight effect added afterwards. The shadows ought to hide much more than they do. Some good bits of architecture, by Mr. J. S. Prout, deserve mention. Such is his 'Temple Tower' (44), from one of our most picturesque old English cities, Bristol, which has also afforded him some other good subjects. 'A Willing Ear' (45), by Mr. J. H. Mole, is a pair of lovers courting in a harvest field. They are but very wooden lay figures. Mr. L. Haghe fails very conspicuously in his historical scenes. Take, for example, his group from Woodstock (53), of Cromwell interrupted by his daughter as he comments on the portrait of King Charles. There is no lack here of anything but real life and heart. So with his *émeute* at Louvain in the old time (61); all is successful in detail, but the whole is naught. There is the wildest bustle and confusion: men with pikes and swords are surging up the steps; here is a child hit accidentally; there a wounded burgher is borne off by his friends; or a sister of charity gives water to a dying man at arms. The closer you look into it, the more action there is to see. But you are not interested in it a bit. All you care for is to see how cleverly Mr. Haghe puts in his puppets. And of the same class is his picture of Charles the First receiving the news of his betrayal (345). It is a mere furniture piece, with a group playing at chess.

Mr. Whymper's landscapes are always pretty; and in his fern-grown 'Skirts of a Wood' (57) there is a charming effect of the spangled light of a beech plantation. The colour is rather cold. His 'Silent Pool' (89) is scarcely so good; and his numerous other works are of an average style. The same may be said of Mr. Bennett. 'The Junction of the Greta and Tees' (67) bears marks of very conscientious labour; and the sentiment thrown into the landscape, in 'The Tees and Mortram Tower' (204), is of a high order. We have to thank Mr. D'Egville for some unpretending but fresh and truthful Venetian views, especially his 'San Gregorio' (68), and his 'Fishing Boats off the Public Gardens' (100).

It is a pleasant task to record that Mr. Bouvier has consider-

ably improved the moral tone of his pictures. In former years some of his works have been of very questionable propriety; but this time there is nothing to complain of. In his 'Sunny Corner, Tolosa' (130), we have a pleasing, though superficial, picture of two young girls looking out of window, over the balcony of which hangs a heavy curtain, after the fashion of the south. We doubt, however, whether any extent of female curiosity would have tempted a Spanish lady to project her unprotected head so far into the blazing sunshine. 'Going to the Fiesta, Spanish Navarre' (141), is more laboured, but is a mere theatrical piece of costume. Mr. Cromek deserves thanks for his careful 'View of Florence (134) from San Miniato.' But what can have tempted him to choose so unpromising a subject for his pencil as the hideous confused piling up of ancient grave-stones in the porch of Bakewell church? There is life and vigour in the sketch of 'British Seamen manning a boat to the rescue of a ship in distress,' by Mr. G. B. Campion (147). But this painter is very unequal. The 'Horse Artillery (152) dashing into Action,' defies art: and his 'Temperance Pledge' (175) is a very tame composition. Mr. Lindsay is not at all to be congratulated on his 'Sunset in Solitude' (157), and his 'River Scene on the Conway' (164) is sadly wooden. Very little of the sentiment of Lalla Rookh has been embodied by Mr. Tidey in his 'Feast of Roses' (171); and, in spite of its laborious orientalisms, the whole picture is very untrue to Eastern manners. But the lake and the moonlight, and the pretty women and children will find plenty of admirers. Mr. Telbin's 'Venice' (182), with its fishing-boats, is better than his 'Dovedale' (208). We grant that nothing is harder to paint than a scene of the latter kind. The peculiar low colouring of the limestone rocks, with their indigenous evergreens, is a pitfall for water-colourists of the new school; and then how few can depict successfully a rapid trout-stream glancing in the sunbeams! Lastly, it demands the highest resources of landscape art to give the right scale to the crags and banks. In all these respects Mr. Telbin has failed, with the great majority of his predecessors, in the attempt. The stream in his canvas is nothing but a dull ditch; and no one could tell the geology of the district from examining his rocks. Mr. T. S. Robins has done more justice to the Medway than Mr. Telbin has to the Dove. There is much merit in his 'Wind against Tide' (234), an overladen hay-barge swinging clumsily down the stream.

Pictures of a mild religious character, like Mr. Lee's 'Infant saying his Prayers' (92), are pretty sure of sale, be their merits what they may: they are very little to our taste. The fault of

Mr. Wehnert's 'Roman Fountain' (80) is that the scene rather wants a more concentrated interest. But as a possible combination of the humours of Italian street life, such as might often be seen in the Piazza di Venezia when a procession was expected, it is very noticeable. Its truthfulness is the merit also of this gentleman's 'Roman Woman and Child' (292), and of his 'Going to Rome' (336), a very pleasant, well-studied group, the mother and her child riding on an ass, and the man leading the animal. The average level of dexterous commonplace reached by Messrs. Rowbotham, Simonau, and Richardson defies any critical notice. M. Morin, a French artist, challenges attention with a Watteau-like scene intended to represent Marie Antoinette acting as milkmaid at Trianon. It is supremely uninteresting. Lastly, the pretty flower and fruit pieces, so abundantly furnished by several lady contributors, scarcely call for notice. Mrs. Margetts is perhaps the most natural of the sisterhood.

We may now proceed to examine the small gallery of French artists, which is now become a fixed institution, and which in many ways is one of the most interesting exhibitions of the season. The alphabetical arrangement of the catalogue is, we may remark, of extreme convenience to a reviewer, though most perplexing in the room itself, where the pictures are arranged quite at random in no sequence of numbers.

M. Antigna is a large exhibitor of sentimental groups, in which, in spite of their technical merits, we can take but small interest. For instance, 'The Rendezvous' (3), a lady in an ermine-trimmed hood keeping an assignation and holding an open letter, can scarcely be said to aim at a very high standard of art. Very silly is the 'Pet Squirrel' (4). The size of these pictures is very large, and the colour crude and displeasing; but there is undoubted artistic power in the painter. M. Bida contributes a vivid but painful sketch of Egyptian recruits driven from their village: and his other *morceaux* of Cairene life are very noteworthy. We cannot see much merit in M. Auguste Bonheur. His sister Madlle. Rosa Bonheur, however, sends a small but very careful and powerful picture of 'Sheep' (19) in a Brittany landscape. Her studies of apple-blossom and cherry-blossom are not without interest, as experiments in another line of art. Madlle. Bourges, one of Edouard Frère's pupils, imitates his homely style with very pleasant expression. In M. Breton's 'Rustic Courtship,' there is a special interest to English eyes in the unfamiliar interior of the French cottage, which is drawn with Wilkie-like minuteness of detail: otherwise it is not very attractive. M. Brion gives us in his 'Early Morning on the Rhine' a powerfully-drawn representation of one of those huge rafts float-

ing down the stream, with a host of men at its head energetically guiding its course with their long sweeps. The general effect is too laborious to be pleasant. The titles of M. Chaplin's gay pictures 'The Toilet,' 'Curiosity,' 'The Prayer,' 'The Album,' are quite enough to show that he paints for the popularity of the shop-window and the bachelor's apartments. This vile class of subjects is almost extinct, we rejoice to say, in the English exhibitions. M. Comte's 'Consulting the Cards' belongs to the same category. The only remarkable feature in M. Courbet's picture 'Sorting the Corn' is a certain stiff præ-Raffaellite method. The tone of colour, however, is very low, and the general effect coarse and crude. A study of M. Couture's for his large and already famous picture of the 'Decadence of Rome' will be looked at with interest. No one has ever so completely embodied the voluptuous descriptions of Petronius. We have always thought that this striking representation of the last debasement of the old heathen civilization is not without its deep moral teaching. The lesson might be profitably enforced at Paris itself. It is distressing to observe how many contributors to the present Exhibition confine themselves to the low and meretricious class of subjects to which we referred above—not always vicious indeed, but always ambiguous and equivocal. Thus M. Devedeux gives us the *tête-à-tête* of two lovers in a garden; M. Dubufe represents 'Spring' as an arch and immodest young lady; M. Dyckman's 'Bride,' and M. Duverger's 'Preparing for the Ball,' tell their own story. M. Gratia is still less under restraint in his pastel drawings of a 'Blonde' and a 'Brunette.' M. Lafon's subjects are 'The Odalisque' and a 'Girl Reading:' and M. Plassan devotes himself to 'The Toilet' and 'The Bouquet.' We have not even yet exhausted the list. M. Richard thus embodies his idea of 'Indiscretion,'—a servant in sabots peeping in at a door and witnessing the salute of a pair of lovers. 'Love's Physician,' by M. Schlesinger, is in the same false taste; and his other picture is a girl sentimentally clasping her admirer's miniature. M. Stevens gives us, as the 'Return from the Bal Masqué,' a pert looking *vivandière*, in the shortest of petticoats, letting herself in by a latch-key to her apartment from the common staircase. 'The Letter' is the title of one of M. Trayer's namby-pamby pictures: and in another we have two girls prying into a trinket-box. M. Van de Broeck is a disciple of the same school, and M. Verheyden is but little better. Side by side, however, with this corrupt and corrupting style of art is the somewhat stupid perhaps, but always healthy and domestic school, of Frère, who affects nothing but cottage interiors and scenes of quiet home life. It is undoubtedly the better of the two; but we

would rather see a still higher aim, and a still loftier apprehension of the purposes and capacities of art. Of M. Frère's little scraps of domesticity we like best the natural unaffectedness of the 'Cut Finger,' and the 'Wood-gatherers.' In the former a little boy brings his cut finger to be bound up by his elder sister—a charmingly simple and life-like scene: in the latter, three children are gathering sticks on a winter day for the cottage hearth. The colour is always rather muddy. There is a good eye for facts in M. Theodore Frère's Egyptian scenes: but none of the charming brightness with which Mr. Lewis has treated the same subjects.

An altogether higher class of art is affected by M. Gallait, in his picture of the Brussels archers paying the last respects to the Counts Egmont and Horn. The scale is far too small, however, for the subject. For the rest, there is thoughtfulness and skill in the group of archers at the foot of the bed on which the bodies lie. The horror of the scene is cunningly enough lessened by the use of a great pall; but the two severed heads, said to have been studied at the guillotine, are quite sufficiently ghastly. Upon the whole this is a striking work, and is more highly finished than most in the collection. One of the most powerful miniatures is M. Gerome's 'Albanian Soldier.' M. Isabey's 'Old Fishing Smack' is drawn with a firm hand; and there is local truth, along with much character, in M. Knaus's elaborate Bavarian sketches: in one of which a policeman calls upon a party of gipsies to show their passports, while in the other a woman is fetching her tipsy husband away from the beerhouse. The method is rather defective. M. Lambinet is a disciple of the English school of landscape; and there is much freshness and faithfulness to nature in his style. Several of his subjects are from our own home counties. In M. Le Poittevin's 'Beerhaus on the Moordek,' it is impossible not to be struck with the truthfulness of the water washing up among the piles, on which this amphibious structure is raised. We next come to the two most ambitious pictures in the room, both by M. Leys. The first represents Wiesseling, the Antwerp carpenter, secretly expounding the Bible in the early days of the Reformation. All is carefully studied, and the accessories are in keeping. Architecture, costume, and details are highly elaborate; and the group is full of expression. But the general style is harsh and archaic, and the whole effect far from satisfying. However, it demonstrates the great and original power of its author, and is a very striking work. The other picture, by M. Leys, is a scene from the siege of Antwerp, a lady being supposed to be interceding for the preservation of a church. There is a Rembrandt-like

gloom and murkiness about the picture, which is inferior in all respects to the former one.

Is M. Lies a disciple of the præ-Raffaellites? He has one or two little pleasant scenes, rather attractive in spite of a hard manner, no air, rigid outlines, and raw colour. This year, M. Meissonnier sends nothing but a crayon drawing of a Mousquetaire. 'The Improvisatore,' by M. Muller—a man mounted on a stone lion, and declaiming to three haggard-looking girls—is a failure. M. Picou is the solitary example of attempting a classical subject in his 'Zephyr and Cupid;' it is not without beauty. It would be hard to be too severe upon such a subject as that chosen by M. Tassaert, in his 'Last Prayer.' It is a mother and daughter dying by suicide through the fumes of charcoal. The object is to invest with sentimental pity this infamous crime. The execution is poor. As far as possible opposed to this unhealthy work are M. Troyon's rural scenes; in which also, though without any elevation of character, there are proofs of great skill and care. M. Van Schendel is on a wrong scent in attempting the tricky effects of candlelight and moonlight. M. Veyrassat is a painter of farm scenes and country life; very fresh and manly in his subjects and style. Threshing, horseshoeing, and the towing-path afford him very characteristic subjects for his brush. M. Wyld appears with a large but not very satisfactory view of the Piazzetta of Venice from the sea, and finally, M. Ziem gives us 'The Grand Canal' in a less firm style than some of his former works had led us to expect.

Having now gone through the principal pictures of the year, we may turn to the Sculpture. This art is still condemned to the Black Hole of Trafalgar Square. It is devoutly to be hoped that in the projected galleries which the Royal Academy intends to build at Burlington House, a proper place for the display of plastic works will not be forgotten.

Following the order of the catalogue, we may notice, first, Mr. Westmacott's 'Triumph of Judith' (1232), in bronze, of considerable merit, the subject being not unduly classicalized. Baron Marochetti's bronze statue of Sir Jamsetjee Jeejeebhoy, the late eminent Parsee merchant of Bombay, is exceedingly dignified and effective. We may remark, by the way, that the monstrosity lately set up by this clever artist in the gardens of Apsley House as a monument to Wellington, is quite enough to cancel all his previous reputation. We do not much admire Mr. Durham's formal sketch for a statue of Caxton (1239), to be placed in the new Westminster Palace Hotel, which occupies the site of the printer's famous house in the Sanctuary. There is promise

in Mr. Boulton's religious statuettes (1241), but he must beware of mere tame conventionalism. 'Frolic' by Mr. Marshall, is a fair *conchetto*. His 'Expulsion' of Adam and Eve from Paradise (1249), is too melo-dramatic in its conception. In the marble statuette of 'Mercy making coats and garments to give to the poor' (1247), Mr. Thrupp has been fairly beaten by the prosaic nature of the injudiciously chosen subject. And the powers of Mr. Birch are quite unequal to the satisfactory portraiture of 'The Good Samaritan' (1248). 'Innocence'—represented as a nude girl, with an asp on her arm—by Mr. Malempré (1250), is pretty, but not without a certain self-consciousness and affectation, which destroy the effect the artist meant to produce. Of a much higher order is Mr. Munro's graceful group (1251) of two little girls, portraits, measuring their height by a tall finger-glove. This is a very pure and charming composition. 'The Love Chase' (1252), by Mr. E. G. Papworth, jun., is not equal in its execution to its conception. We wish we could have more commended a work that is evidently an honest effort after a high ideal. The general effect is but feeble, and surely the hound is disproportionately small. Mr. Ruddock should persevere. There are much worse things in the Exhibition than 'Submission of the Virgin' (1254). Mr. Bell sends his model of a manly figure of a private of the Guards as he fought at Inkermann, intended for the memorial in Waterloo Place. The statue of Dr. Isaac Barrow, by Mr. Noble, will stand in competition with a work of world-wide fame in the ante-chapel of Trinity College, Cambridge. It would be far too much to say that it will not suffer by comparison. But it is a figure decidedly above the average; and as good as is to be expected considering the subject, who, although a great divine and philosopher, is not one to inspire an artist so profoundly as Newton did Roubiliac. This statue is a graceful present from Lord Lansdowne to the old college. Mr. Theed, in his colossal Newton for Grantham (1261), is exceedingly commonplace, not to say vulgar. The unfinished recumbent effigy of Queen Katherine Parr (1259) by Mr. J. B. Philip, intended to be placed in the chapel of Sudeley Castle, where she lies buried, is an attractive as well as able statue. It has great dignity and sweetness, without a stiffness or antiquation on the one hand, or that affectation of *abandon* which is to be observed in most modern revivals of the old form of monumental figures. The latter fault is very conspicuous in the recumbent effigy of a lady for Harlington church, by Mr. Theed (1263).

Mr. Bandel's 'Morning Dew' an alto-relievo for the hall of Bridgewater House—representing one of the Hours—is more

interesting as showing that this class of subject is not quite obsolete, than for its intrinsic merits. The nude figure has not that unconsciousness which is an indispensable characteristic of pure art. 'Cain and Abel' (1265), by Mr. Redfern, is remarkable as being the only purely anatomical subject in the Exhibition. It is also, we hear, the first work of a young and self-taught artist, who comes from the same neighbourhood to which we owe Chantrey. The group, which is quite nude, is amazingly spirited, and original, and expressive. We admire the artist's boldness in aiming at once at the very highest flights of his art, and wish him the success of which there is certainly unusual promise in this cast. In Mr. Earle's 'First Lesson' (1267)—a mother teaching her child on her knees to say its prayers—there is an unfortunate mixture of stiffness and feebleness. Mr. Wood sends an unfinished statue of 'Daphne' (1269), branching into a laurel. It is rather French and weak in its style. 'The Parting of Paul and Virginia' (1270), by Mr. Durham, is careful and refined, but does not go beyond mediocrity; nor has M. Geefs reached anything but a certain easy gracefulness in his 'Réveil d'Amour' (1271), a nymph with Cupid in her lap. Mr. Fontana has a pretty academic piece of classical feeling, 'Cupid captured by Venus' (1273). We had hoped that such sepulchral memorials were well-nigh extinct as that designed by Mr. Edwards for the late Duchess of Beaufort. Mr. Leifchild's marble statue of Cromwell (1282) is quite unworthy of its subject. The palm of supreme vulgarity must be adjudicated either to Mr. Hollins' statue of Mr. Holloway, or to Mr. Crittenden's bust of Mr. Spurgeon (1285). It is a questionable compliment to immortalize in so unflattering a way the heavy, awkward, low-browed, and sensuous countenance here assigned to the popular preacher; and the costume—a neat open waistcoat, with tight stock and expansive shirt-collar, is more realistic than becoming in Carrara marble. Alderman Rose (1311), by Mr. Burnard, rivals Mr. Spurgeon's bust in the matter of whiskers. Mr. Foley has thrown his usual cleverness into the uncongenial task of decorating an ill-designed monument (1298), with three female figures at the tomb. We note a spirited bust of Lord Brougham (1299) by Mr. Jones; and Mr. Harrison's bust of 'Rosalind' (1302) is poetically imagined. Still better are Mr. Thomas's two marble statues, 'Briseis' and 'Thetis' (1326 and 1332), forming part of a chimney-piece for Mr. Holdsworth, of Glasgow. We record, with great satisfaction, this example of an enlightened patronage of high art. Among the exceedingly stupid busts, which in formal array crowd those dreary shelves in the Sculpture

Room, Mr. Foley's ideal head of Egeria (1344) is conspicuous for unusual beauty and interest; and Mr. Munro has a charming medallion (1364) of a lady. Finally, Mr. Leifchild frightens us out of the room by a minacious bronze 'Head of Cronos' (1374), to which, for some wholly unintelligible reason, he has given an expression which is simply demoniacal.

Upon the whole, however, we are not disposed to consider the sculpture of the year at all discouraging. If there is no work that is likely to be immortal, and if our greatest English sculptor, Gibson, still persists in absenting himself from the Exhibition, yet there are signs, not only of new talent, but new sources of patronage, which will certainly evoke the genius of the day. And again, there are indications of a better taste in the choice of subjects than has been lately in fashion. In this respect, Sculpture has an advantage over Painting. Allegory and mythology, though nearly worn threadbare, have not been neglected among sculptors to the same extent as among the professors of the sister art; and thus there has been maintained a standard of idealism which may be a good starting-point for a fresh development. The nude is not quite proscribed in plastic art, and this alone has been sufficient to preserve it from the wretched commonplace everyday realism and naturalism which has almost engulfed our painters. But it is curious that, with the single exception perhaps of the medallionizing recumbent effigies, sculpture has shown, as yet, no sign of any such influence as that which the præ-Raffaellite school has exerted upon painting. This is not the case abroad. In France and Belgium—probably from an ecclesiastical demand for religious statues—have attempted a reform of sculpture in that direction. And we hear with interest that in the next Exhibition of Modern Art in Paris, a bas-relief of 'The Virgin and Child' by M. Oudiné, of a decidedly præ-Raffaellite character, has attracted considerable attention among critics. That English sculpture exists at all amidst the discouragement it meets on all sides, is not a little remarkable. But that it not only maintains its ground, but begins to show signs of renewed life and vigour, is a subject for most sincere congratulation.

Our survey of the Fine Arts of the year would not be complete without some notice of the architectural designs that have been publicly exhibited. Architecture, the mistress art, as she is justly called, has for many years fared still worse than sculpture at the hands of the Royal Academy. Requiring a disproportionately large space for the proper display of the elevations, ground-plan, and sections of a building, the architects have been confined to one of the smallest apartments at the disposal of the

Academy; and year by year this most inadequate accommodation has been curtailed by the encroachment of a herd of indifferent paintings, for the rejection of which no sensible person would have blamed that well-abused body the Hanging Committee. As a consequence, a separate architectural exhibition has been organized; which, opening this year its ninth display in a new gallery in Conduit Street, has almost stripped the Academy walls of architectural drawings. The comparatively few architects who still send their works to Trafalgar Square, do so probably as a qualification for future co-optation into the Academy. But most even of these send the majority of their works to Conduit Street; and one of the architectural associates, Mr. Scott, has selected the Architectural Exhibition in preference to his own Academy for the exclusive display of his own works. For our part, we greatly regret that the academicians have practically banished one of the arts from its proper home. Our sympathies are with the independent architecturalists, who, rather than see their art unjustly neglected, have forfeited the *prestige* and material advantage of academic patronage. But we hope that the breach may soon be healed, and that the new palace of the Academy, which is to solve so many difficulties, will welcome back the exiles with the promise of ample justice and unlimited space. For it is an indisputable truth that neither of the divided architectural exhibitions is a thorough success. Whereas the art itself is at this moment in a more flourishing condition than it has ever been, the year's display of exhibited drawings is quite pitiful. In no sense do these drawings give a fair picture of the present state of architecture. Of the scanty collection in the North Room, little perhaps was to be expected; but the flourish of trumpets about the new architectural galleries in Conduit Street, in which the profession was to have all its own way, raised hopes which were wretchedly falsified by the result. The fact is, that the split in the camp is operating most disadvantageously. Some hold aloof from the bold and dubious experiment of the separate exhibition, and, waiting for better days, exhibit nowhere, or else exhibit inadequately. The main object of an exhibition is frustrated when there is no quasi-authoritative body to exercise a certain power of selection, and when the fact of admission does not secure to each work the certainty of public criticism and examination. As it is, both refuges for the destitute are driven to welcome every applicant, however unworthy; and no one is sure, in either case, that the world will take the trouble to look at the unselected mass of drawings as in any sense representing the present attainments or prospects of the art among us.

We will endeavour, however, very briefly to notice the more conspicuous architectural works exhibited in the two galleries: for, in spite of all drawbacks, there is no doubt that some estimate may be formed, if not of the degree, yet of the present tendency of architectural progress, by an examination of the general character of the works exhibited. Giving precedence to the Royal Academy, we observe, in the first place, some rather remarkable illustrations of the great improvement in design which has become common in buildings intended for merely utilitarian purposes. Take, for instance, Messrs. Stephenson and Hunt's drawings of Allsopp's gigantic brewery at Burton-on-Trent (1047), and Mr. Billings' Glasgow Warehouse (1068). We cannot, indeed, consider either of these attempts very happy; but there are in each of them evident tokens of a desire on the part of the builders to improve upon the old type of such structures. The former design is a *coup manqué* architecturally, in a case where success would have been easy, if only from the imposing dignity of the scale. The latter is better; but the heavy castellated effect of the Florentine Palazzo is *not*, we contend, the right model for a Glasgow warehouse. The Venetian type, chosen by Mr. Anson for his Merchants' Offices in Mark Lane (1122), is only one degree more appropriate. Mr. Jones's Telegraph Station in Threadneedle Street (1131) is another failure in spite of good intentions. This subject might, in other hands, have given rise to very novel and sterling architectural combinations. Mr. Edmeston submits a view of the 'Great Gallery' of the rival Architectural Exhibition (1135). The timid decorations and tame details are surely in no respect a credit to the profession, which is in a sense collectively responsible for this building. We sincerely pity Mr. E. M. Barry, if the selected competition designs for the Ellesmere Memorial submitted to him for adjudication are to be judged of by the specimen (1137) exhibited by Mr. Ridley. And, if this deserved to be honourably mentioned, what must the rejected designs have been! It is superfluous to praise the artistic merit and masterly treatment of Mr. Digby Wyatt's 'Renaissance Room at Ashbridge' (1061). Mr. Penson must, we think, sacrifice comfort to the picturesque in his house at Pen-y-Warr, Aberystwith (1085). Mr. Burn comes before us with a frowning granite entrance which he is building for Gosford Castle, Armagh (1097). Surely this castellation is out of place in this century. To us it seems nothing better than a cumbrous and expensive piece of barren antiquarianism. Mr. Teulon surely errs by overdoing the characteristics of his style in the additions to Barton Manor (1108); and Messrs. Prichard and Seddon make the same mis-

take, as it seems to us, in their design (1109) for remodelling the exterior of Ealing Park. On a smaller scale, Mr. Gray's Highgate Villa (1144) is open to the same charge. It is fair to add that Mr. Teulon is far more happy in his extensive Jacobean works at Shadwell Court (1146). The Royal Albert Asylum, Cambridge (1089), by Mr. Peck, is unworthy of the University town. Mr. Lane's Jardin d'Hiver for the Sultan (1114), an iron and glass structure, is a failure where failure is, comparatively speaking, difficult.

From the specimens of religious architecture, which are neither numerous nor of a very high order, we may mention with approbation the picturesque exterior of Messrs. Prichard and Seddon's design for Christ's College, Brecon (1050). Mr. Smirke chooses for a small Yorkshire village church (1060) the Basilican style, with an apse, a plentiful use of marbles, and a tessellated floor. The effect of this will depend entirely on the scale of the building. Waiving the question of the suitableness of architectural style, it may be safely asserted that a miniature copy of a basilica, with no essential modifications, will be an unsatisfactory toy. Mr. Murray exhibits good average Gothic drawings—exterior and interior—for a Roman Catholic church at Cork (1062); and Mr. Street sends two very original designs (1069), admirably sketched, of Pointed Village Churches in course of erection. Mr. J. P. Jones shows some facility, if not promise, in two views, exterior and interior, of the church of Sts. Peter and Paul, Cork; and Mr. Goldie throws both force and character into a design for St. Peter's Church, Scarborough (1130). Of the numerous other stale and unprofitable ecclesiastical designs, we will charitably say nothing. Classical architecture would seem, if we may judge from the present Exhibition, almost defunct. We notice a clever and interesting view of modern Rome (1051) by Mr. Ashpitel. It is taken from the Palatine Hill, looking north-east.

In the rival Architectural Exhibition we shall pass over all the sketches, however clever, of existing buildings, excepting a very remarkable elevation of Giotto's famous Campanile (343), drawn by Mr. Street from his own sketches and measurements. This has plainly been a labour of love with the skilful draughtsman. The south doorway of the nave of St. Saviour's, Southwark (149), drawn by Mr. Griffith, deserves special notice; for this, let us hope, will one day be useful in the rebuilding, which must surely be in store for that shamefully mutilated church. For the rest, the most surprising thing is, that so unlimited a demand for better architecture has not improved the character of the supply. The walls of these galleries are crowded, not

merely with such chimeras and vagaries as Mr. Brewer's Palace of Art, or Mr. George's and Mr. Gompertz's imaginary cathedrals, or even as Mr. Owen Jones's visionary Palace of the People at Muswell Hill, but with designs for substantial works—churches and chapels, schools and colleges, parsonages and villas, mansions and clubs, alms-houses and dispensaries, town-halls, vestry-halls, people's institutes and reading-rooms, markets and assize courts, banks, warehouses, theatres, circuses, water-towers, pumping-houses and cemeteries. Never was there such an active time for the building art. Again we say that the absence of more originality and ability amidst all this encouragement is astonishing. Happily there are exceptions, but the majority of these works are hopelessly mediocre. We do not mean to notice the competition drawings in this Exhibition, though they range from Mr. Street's and Mr. Pennethorne's Public Offices at the one extreme, to the inconceivably paltry designs for the Chelsea vestry hall or Spurgeon's tabernacle at the other. We counsel the managers of this Exhibition to refuse admission, in future, by an invariable rule, to rejected competition drawings. They can have no effect but that of 'boring' the public. Original works actually intended to be carried out ought alone to be received. Architecture on paper is as worthless as a soap-bubble. It is not till a design has been estimated and tendered for that it deserves attention or criticism.

The churches are the most conspicuous features in the Conduit Street Gallery. Mr. Scott sends a lithograph of a bold and very unusual adaptation of Gothic in his Woolwich Dockyard Church. The Roman Catholic church at Bandon, by Messrs. Hadfield and Goldie (35), is a spirited Middle-Pointed design. Mr. Peacock's St. Simon's Church, Chelsea (73), is miserably commonplace, in which respect it is on a par with Mr. Lewis's church at Clapham (110). Mr. Ashpitel exhibits a design for the *réhabilitation* of St. Margaret's, Westminster, in a very florid kind of Gothic (121). At any rate this is better than the senseless scheme of destroying the church altogether, on the plea of opening a better view of the Abbey. It is the presence of the church, and its proximity to the minster, that gives scale to the whole architectural *entourage*. Mr. Withers appears as the careful and trustworthy restorer of several small churches. Mr. Colling affects the Romanesque style for a rather dignified church now building at Hooton Park, Cheshire (151). In the exterior of a church to be built in the parish of St. John, Westminster (160), Mr. Street decidedly achieves the greatest success of the Exhibition. It is a red-brick building, with a great deal of constructional polychrome and the picturesque feature

of a detached campanile. Mr. Truefitt provokes a smile by a drawing of a circular temporary church at Holloway (163), built in six weeks, and holding 900 people, half of whom are duly shown, arranged in gay concentric circles, in the internal section. That Mr. Mumford's design for St. Paul's, Tottenham (275), should have been chosen, argues an extraordinary want of taste in that Quaker-haunted suburban village. Mr. Coe's church at Brechin (301) is one of the least satisfactory in the room. Heywood Church, Lancashire (331), as rebuilt by Mr. Clarke, is imposing. Mr. Tite, M.P., exhibits the model of a church he is building at Gerrard's Cross (369), which would have been discreditable twenty years ago, and is now ludicrously behind the age.

That Mr. E. M. Barry's tomb in the Norwood Cemetery (137), being so vigorous and costly as it is, is not better in respect of purity of design, is quite unaccountable. No other sepulchral monument in the gallery deserves a notice.

We are glad to see other great towns, such as Leeds, Glasgow, and Nottingham, imitating London and Manchester in rebuilding their warehouses with great architectural pretensions. Amongst the best works of this class we may specify Mr. T. C. Clarke's warehouses in Southwark (27), which have considerable character. Mr. Clay's new printing offices (33), by Mr. Dawson, go rather too far or not far enough. Mr. Withers has shown unusual ability in his glass-painting works and studio in Endell Street (174). And Mr. Adams's pumping engine-house and boiler-house at Lichfield (85) is a triumphant proof of the great dignity obtainable by the mere unaffected use of the commonest materials when properly treated. The most pretentious street-architecture in the room, and also the worst, is Mr. André's fancy design (80). Mr. Edgar's Hartshill Institute, in memory of the late Herbert Minton, ought to have been better. Its architecture seems inferior to its decorations, in which we note with satisfaction the introduction of frescoes by some local artists of the Potteries.

Of the numerous mansions exhibited, Mr. C. Buxton's design for his own house at Fox Warren (112) is one of the most conspicuous. It is overdone and impure in style, too free a use being made of the exceptional elements of the picturesque. May it never be our fate to inhabit one of Mr. Papworth's villas! This gentleman presents us with his idea of a block of four villas, 'Flemish, Spanish, German, and Italian hints—eclectically treated' (72). Fancy all these in combination! Mr. Goldie has carried to the extreme of caricature the hints he has borrowed while reading Mr. Scott's 'Secular Architecture' (349). Mr. Blomfield has fallen into the same error of

excess in his 'Public Drinking Fountains' (56); and Mr. Blake borrows, without acknowledgment, and completely spoils in doing so, a valuable hint of Mr. Burges' in his Oswestry Fountain (392). The latter gentleman exhibits some most ingenious and clever furniture, carved and painted in very characteristic subjects by Mr. Westlake. It is, however, too much of an archæological *conchetto*. His Sculpture for St. Augustine's, Canterbury (352), is far better. But why was not a cast of this alto relievo sent rather to the Royal Academy?

And now that we have completed our survey of the chief Art-Exhibitions of the season, we are in a position to pronounce the opinion, that the general result is far from unsatisfactory. If there is no striking novelty in any department, and no marked advance, at least there is no retrogression. We have noted more than one hopeful *débüt*, and we have observed the realization of some former promises. It may be taken for granted, now, that the 'præ-Raffaellite school, properly so called, has seen its best days. It is more than ever evident, that its leaders are either becoming confirmed in mannered eccentricities or relapsing into moderation. At any rate, we owe to this singular school a marked improvement in colouring, in conscientious attention to technical truth of detail, and in a general higher appreciation of the end and objects of art. Further, if there is ample evidence of abundant artistic power among us, there are proofs no less manifest of a widening circle of patronage and intelligent connoisseurship. It is not a little curious, as a subsidiary proof of this, to observe the substantial unanimity of the principal organs of criticism in the more important works of the year. The sympathy that exists between the artistic community and the general public is a most hopeful sign for the interests of art. Art has never thriven, unless, to a great extent, it represents the opinion of the age. It may lead or influence opinion, but can neither drive it nor oppose it. But this relation, if it has its advantages, has also its drawbacks. The weaknesses and faults of the time will be reflected in its art. And it appears to us, that that which has happened to literature, is now befalling art. A certain prudery, a certain mock modesty and affectation of delicacy, have well nigh emasculated our imaginative literature. Poets, novelists, and dramatists are compelled to write *virginibus puerisque*: and that specious refinement which has already banished from the pulpit any denunciation of certain social vices is trying to cripple the artist as well as the author. For a long time, painting, appealing to a limited and educated class, was proof against this purism: and Etty's pictures, though they may have shocked part of the community, were never proscribed. But at length that 'demon of

respectability' against which an eminent living prelate is said to have preached an indignant sermon, is creeping into the studio. Now that the great middle class look at pictures, talk about them, and even buy them, a general 'respectability' of subject becomes expedient. No longer would Mr. Frost's nymphs be winked at; and that grinding tyranny of ill-informed public opinion, which (as Mr. Mill so eloquently complains) imposes its own arbitrary will on the minority, bids fair to revive among us the fanatical crotchets of Savonarola. Already anatomical art is looked askance upon. Heathen mythology is almost forbidden. There is actually only one nude figure this year in the Royal Academy, and one half-nude, and both are unimportant. An amiable nobleman, it is well known, has conceived the hope of closing the life school, so far as regards the female model, by legislative enactment. It is only in sculpture that the unclothed human form is now to be seen in English exhibitions; and we do not doubt that, if this form of art becomes more generally popular, the same restrictions will be imposed upon it. Now, plainly, we think this much to be regretted. We shall scarcely be suspected of any wish for a low-pitched standard of public morals. We would gladly sacrifice anatomical truth altogether if it were not to be obtained but at the price of purity. But experience shows that the fear is groundless. And what thoughtful observer of human nature believes that an affected external modesty is a necessary sign of real purity of morals? Is our own age free from what is euphemistically called the Social Evil, because such things are never spoken of, even in reprobation? We verily believe that prudery has been carried among us to a pernicious excess. We object to the total abstinence principle in art as well as in other things. The human form is the most finished and beautiful work of Creative Power, and its ideal may be studied and admired by those who can appreciate it without injury to their moral sense. Grant that it may be perilous to some. There is no good thing that may not be abused. The true safeguard, in our judgment, exists in moderation and in honesty of aim and purpose. All nudity is not indecent. We should condemn the corrupt and suggestive pruriency of a Pradier as severely as any one. But true ideal art, such as produced Baily's Eve or the Venus of Milo, may be as fearless in its innocence and purity as was St. Agnes, in her beautiful legend, in the house of shame. We do not wish to pursue here an almost boundless subject, but we would point out one fact which is well worth considering. In proportion as English literature abandons the bold recognition of one-half of what constitutes human nature, does the sale of abominable French novels, which systematically ignore the

other half, increase among us. Our notes on the French Exhibition will show that the same phenomenon is not unlikely to be reproduced in matters of art. But this is not all, nor the worst. A false public opinion may drive the ideal representation of the nude human form out of public sight. But in proportion as it succeeds, it will encourage a far worse evil—with all its dangers infinitely exaggerated and none of its correctives. For our own parts we would much rather see any number of ideal goddesses or nymphs in perfect nudity on the walls of the Academy than those infamous and degrading actualities which abound in the stereoscopic shop windows in so many back streets of London. There is some check to the one, but none at all to the other. Enough on a painful subject, but one pregnant, in more ways than one, with important consequences to art.

It will not be for some years to come that the Royal Academy will be able to invite the public to its new galleries. We have incidentally expressed an opinion that the change of domicile might advantageously be attended by the admission of water-colour painting to its cycle of recognized arts. The whole constitution of the Academy, however, will probably be considered, with a view to reform, before the Government formally grant to it the concessions which it has demanded. Without sharing the hostility of many of our contemporaries to its present organization, and without forgetting how much the Academy has done for English art, we are of opinion that some enlargement of its basis, and some more popular reconstruction of its laws, are now imperatively demanded. We earnestly hope that this important subject may meet with dispassionate examination and temperate adjustment. Meanwhile we strongly recommend to the Academy some liberal concessions which will go far to disarm some existing popular prejudices. Why, for instance, should not the public even now be allowed access to the diploma pictures—surely a most interesting historical series of English paintings—and to those specimens of ancient art which the Academy is known to possess? Is it not strange that any one can gain admission to the Bridgewater Gallery but not to the private collection of an Academy which, although a corporate body, only exists for public objects? We, at least, have no wish for the destruction of our English Academy but only for its reform. In spite of its shortcomings as to sculpture and architecture—to mention nothing else—the Royal Academy has, upon the whole, been most useful to English art; and reconstructed as we hope to see it, the future will be greatly in its power. Our academicians ought not to be satisfied till they have recovered their right position as the leaders of English art in all its branches.

THE CAMPAIGN IN ITALY.

ON the 29th of April the Emperor of Austria declared war against the King of Sardinia, and on the same day his army crossed the Ticino. The invading force, under the command of General Gyulay,¹ is believed to have numbered about 120,000 men. The circumstances of the time, and the subsequent acts of the Austrian commander, have suggested the notion that the political object of precipitating the outbreak of a war deemed inevitable was the sole motive for the commencement of hostilities. It may be long before the world is aware of the full truth; but until proof to that effect is given, we shall hesitate to believe that, for the first time in the history of war, so great a military movement has been made for no military object whatever. There may have been, as some reports have it, dissension amongst the advisers of the Austrian Emperor; as in former Italian wars the projects of the general in command may have been marred by ill-judged orders from a distance, or by natural indecision of character; but to suppose that he had no further design than to feed his army for a few weeks in the enemy's territory, until driven out by a superior force, is to attribute to him a degree of incompetence, or else an undue apprehension of his opponents, that does not square with what we know of the general character and tone of the Austrian army. It is far more likely that General Gyulay hesitated between several different designs, than that he should have been altogether without any. A rapid survey of his proceedings may enable us to form some conjecture on the subject.

Referring our readers to the map of Upper Italy, with which they are doubtless familiar, for it has been continually in their hands during the last eight weeks, we shall merely remind them of the position occupied by the invading army. Piedmont is a broad valley lying between the Alps and the Apennine; from its eastern frontiers at the foot of the mountains, where it is about sixty miles wide, it narrows gradually to Cuneo at its south-western extremity, where the mountains, rising on every side but one, form the natural boundary of the Valley of

¹ The rank of Lieutenant Field Marshal, which is third in rank in the hierarchy of the Austrian army, is about equivalent to that of General in our own service: we shall use the shorter and more convenient designation.

the Po. In the very centre of the territory lies an irregular group of hills, of trifling dimensions compared with the great mountains to the north and south, yet sufficient to modify materially the physical features of the country. Were it not for this obstacle, the waters descending from the mountains on either side would all unite at once to form one central river. As it is, however, the streams from the snowy Alps are all poured into the Po, on the west and north of the Montferrat Hills, while the torrents from the Apennine, uniting in the inconstant Tanaro, flow to the eastward on the south side of the same hills. Close to their base, on their eastern side, the Po, after passing the fortress of Casale, and receiving the waters of the Sesia, flows nearly due south for ten miles to the fortified town of Valenza, and there resumes its eastern direction towards Piacenza and Cremona. About five miles south of Valenza, seated on the Tanaro, which joins the Po a few miles to the east of that town, is Alessandria, the key of the western, as Verona is of the eastern half of Upper Italy. To this, as a centre, converge all the main railways and roads of Piedmont—westward, along the valley of the Tanaro is the road to Turin; northward, by Valenza and Mortara, to Novara and the Lago Maggiore, with a branch on the west side of the Sesia leading to Vercelli; eastward, by Tortona to Stradella, and the frontier of Parma; and south-eastward, by Novi to Genoa and the Mediterranean.

This position, which commands ready access to every part of the Piedmontese territory, nature and art have combined to render defensible against a greatly superior force. The space between the Po and the Tanaro is surrounded on every side, except the west, by those rivers, the passage of the Po being guarded by the two fortresses of Casale and Valenza, and an army properly disposed in the intervening space may be brought within a few hours to oppose the attempt of an enemy to cross either river. Into this natural stronghold Moreau led the broken remains of the French army after their disastrous Italian campaign of 1799, when pursued by Suwaroff, who was at the head of a force more than twice as numerous, and inflated by victory. The only serious attempt to attack the position was repulsed with heavy loss, and unless Valenza were secured by a successful *coup de main*, there is no reason to suppose that a determined resistance would be less fortunate against assailants at the present day. But even supposing the passage of the Po to be successfully effected by an enemy, the citadel of Alessandria is at hand, and able to receive an entire army. We have no trustworthy information as to the present state of the fortifications of the city of Alessandria, which lies on the south side of the

Tanaro. The enormous sums lavished upon them by the first Napoleon were utterly wasted, as the place was dismantled in 1815, the citadel on the north side of the river being alone preserved. For several years past, and in anticipation of the present struggle, the Piedmontese Government has been engaged in restoring and arming the defences of the city, and there is good reason to believe that in the hands of resolute defenders it is secure from a sudden attack.

The eastern portion of the Piedmontese territory is cut into irregular parallelograms by the streams issuing from the Alpine valleys, and following a tolerably direct course to join the Po. The most important of these is the Ticino, forming the frontier of Lombardy. Some twenty miles to the westward is the Sesia, and at an equal distance—half way between that river and Turin—the more impetuous torrent of the Dora Baltea, swollen by the melted snows of the great chain between Mont Blanc and Monte Rosa. The direct road from Milan to Turin, keeping to the dry country towards the foot of the Alps, passes by Novara and Vercelli; approaching the Po at Chivasso, about fourteen miles from Turin. There is no fortified town on the entire line; and, except at the passage of the Dora Baltea, where some defensive works had been hastily thrown up, no position in which an inferior force could with advantage have attempted to resist the advance of an army. South of this main line of road between the Ticino, the Sesia, and the Dora Baltea, the plain subsides gradually towards the Po. It is intersected by numerous canals and water-courses, and a great part of the surface laid out in rice-grounds, kept constantly irrigated, and very unfavourable for the movements of troops.

It has been said that the original design of the Austrian commander was to march rapidly on Turin; and that the execution of the plan was prevented by the delay of three days, accorded to Lord Malmesbury's last hopeless efforts to stay the explosion of war after the train was already lighted.

If the mere object of planting the double-headed eagle on the palace of Turin, and levying a war contribution on the inhabitants, had been equivalent to the serious risk of exposing his line of communications, and being forced to fight a battle on his return in a position in which defeat would have been disaster, there is no good reason why General Gyulay should not have persevered in his original intention when he crossed the Ticino on the 29th of April. Although the French transports were ready at Toulon and Marseilles, and though Genoa is less than ninety miles by road and railway from Novara, the Austrians might certainly have accomplished the sixty miles from Novara

to Turin, leaving a sufficient force to check the first efforts of the French and Piedmontese, before an army in a state fit to take the field could have been carried from France to the rear of their line of operations. They had only to deduct three days from their visit to the Piedmontese capital to find themselves in the same position, as if the delay had not been accorded to the supplications of Lord Malmesbury.

The truth is, that such a design, if it ever really existed, was in every way objectionable, and peculiarly unsuited to the character of the Austrian army, as well as to the political attitude of the Government. With the French columns rapidly advancing over the Genèvre and the Cenis, and a secure retreat on every side for the Piedmontese troops, in case of defeat in any partial encounters, it was most unlikely that any blow could be struck which would weaken the military resources of the King of Sardinia; while in his states, unlike their own, the Austrians could not hope to stir up insurrection by a displacement of the seat of Government. The temporary occupation of the capital would have been a mere piece of bravado, for which the Austrian general would have risked the safety and the very existence of his army.

Whatever may have been his first project, it is clear that, on the 29th of April, General Gyulay had ceased to think of a march upon Turin. Instead of pressing forward along the road to the capital, the bulk of his army was moved into the low country between the Ticino, the Po, and the Sesia; while his head-quarters were fixed at Mortara, and afterwards moved to Garlasco, but four or five miles from the Lombard frontier.

The most important strategical object which a powerful army entering Piedmont could propose to itself would be to attack the position, of which we have already spoken as the military key to the possession of the entire country—the triangle guarded by the fortresses of Alessandria, Casale, and Valenza. The possession of the two latter, or even of one of them, would have materially affected the plans of the allies at a time when an early check given to the progress of the French army might have produced important political results. Looking at the question exclusively in a military point of view, it is our opinion that, if no such attempt were to be made, it would have been wiser not to take the mass of the army across the frontier. After assuming the offensive with an imposing force, it must dispirit any troops to retain them for a month in complete inaction. It is said that the heavy rains of the early part of May account for the prolonged inactivity of the Austrians; but the rain began on the seventh day after they crossed the frontier; Casale and Valenza

were each about twenty-five miles distant, and the right time to attack was the earliest moment at which men and artillery could have been brought against them.

Failing any more important object, some prestige might have been gained, and confidence given to the Austrian troops, by striking here and there a blow which would have interrupted the communications and delayed the progress of the allies. There is one point at which such a blow might have been struck with marked effect. The great preparations made in France for transporting troops by sea were well known throughout Europe, sufficiently proving that Genoa would be the true base of the operations of the French army during the first portion, at least, of the present campaign; and in point of fact the bulk of the troops, and nearly all the artillery, have arrived by that route. The railway and the two lines of road that lead from Genoa to Alessandria and the interior of Piedmont, after mounting the steep defiles of the Ligurian Apennine, descend much less steeply to the northward, and all enter the plain of Piedmont at Novi, about fourteen miles from Alessandria. This place is not more than forty miles from Pavia, nearly the entire distance being traversed by railway. It would have been as easy for the Austrians to have crossed the Po below as above Pavia; light troops thrown rapidly forward might probably have secured locomotives and railway carriages to aid the operation, and by the 1st of May they might have occupied Novi with a force which would have materially delayed the concentration of the allied armies, and enabled the commander to inflict serious mischief on the detachments that from either side might have been sent against him. It is true that the position could not have been held long, as it would be liable to be turned by the French through the Valley of the Trebbia. It would appear as if this or some similar project had been entertained by the Austrian general, as it is hard to understand with what other object the corps of General Benedek, 40,000 strong, was sent across the Po on the 4th of May. The sudden rise of the river, owing to the rain of the following night, induced Benedek to recross the river; and except the *reconnaissance* which led to the action at Montebello, no enterprise of any kind was undertaken by General Gyulay from the 29th of April until the 2nd of June, when he found his right flank turned by the French army, and he was forced to make a precipitate retreat into the Lombard territory.

The engagement at Montebello does not offer much matter for remark, unless it be as to the impossibility of learning the truth from the official reports of military men, and especially

when they are Frenchmen. The encounter commenced fortuitously, the Austrians not knowing the position or the force of their adversaries, and the attack being a surprise to the French, who with four battalions resisted the advance of that portion of the Austrian force that had followed the main road towards Voghera. There can be no doubt that both the French troops and the small body of Piedmontese cavalry engaged fought admirably; but the habitual exaggerations of the French press, and the suppression of the official bulletins, rather tend to detract from than to add to the general opinion of the merit of the troops and of their commanders. The report of General Forey, which explains very clearly the commencement of the action, entirely avoids all information as to the force that came to his assistance in the course of the day; and though he alludes to the appearance of several additional regiments, it is not from him but from the Austrian report that the world were informed of the continued arrival of fresh troops, brought up by railway from the rear throughout the day. While the 'Patrie' and other Government papers proclaimed the affair as a victory of 50,000 French over 15,000 Austrians, it is now understood that the real battle, which ensued when the French drove the Austrians out of Montebello, was a hard-fought and bloody conflict between forces very equally balanced, in which the French ultimately prevailed, but without forcing their enemy to a precipitate or disorderly retreat.

The next conspicuous event of the campaign was the battle or series of combats sustained by the Piedmontese troops on the 30th and 31st of May. Animated by the example of their king, the Italian soldiers fought with extraordinary energy and courage against a superior force of Austrians; but they were in imminent danger of being outflanked and overpowered, when the 3rd regiment of Zouaves, said in some accounts to have been attached to the corps of General Cialdini, averted the danger by a desperate bayonet charge upon an Austrian battery. On that occasion, and in every other encounter since the war has commenced, it has been fully seen that the improved weapons of modern war have in no degree lessened the value and importance of the bayonet as the weapon that finally decides victory in a well-fought conflict between troops at all equally matched. So far it would appear that the French owe whatever advantages they have obtained to their superiority over the Austrians at close hand-to-hand fighting, rather than to any pre-eminence in musketry or artillery practice.

Although the Emperor of the French has favoured the world with an explanation of the reasons which determined the opera-

tions of his army, it is to the War Office at Turin that we are indebted for the first intelligible account of the military movements which led to the retreat of the Austrians and the occupation of Milan by the allies.

After the action at Montebello, in which the Austrians ascertained that the French were established in considerable force on the right bank of the Po, General Gyulay made no other change in the disposition of his army than further to concentrate his forces in the lower part of the quadrangle between the Alps, the Ticino, the Po, and the Sesia. The position seems to have been selected, in the first instance, with the idea that it would afford a good base for partial operations against the communications of the French army, and subsequently retained from the belief that it effectually covered the western frontier of Lombardy. The first object was defeated by a want of rapidity and decision in the earlier movements of the Austrians; in the second they were still more signally unsuccessful, owing to the inherent defects of their position, but still more to the utter mismanagement of their leader. Apprehending the movements of the French army on his left flank, and upon the line of the Po between Pavia and Piacenza, the Austrian general gradually withdrew towards the Po the detachments of his army which had occupied Vercelli, Novara, and the main line of road from Turin to Milan; but the allies, having taken every means to fix his attention on the movements of the army on the south side of the Po, prepared to make their real attack to the northward by turning the right flank of the Austrian position. A clear account of the operations by which the entire French army was in four days moved from the front and left of the Austrians to the banks of the Ticino between Novara and Milan, is given in the Sardinian bulletin of the 7th June. The attack made by the Sardinians, on the 30th May, upon the Austrian positions between Vercelli and Mortara, was designed to mask the great movement of the French army; but the entire operation might have been defeated if the Austrian commander had acted with sufficient energy and promptitude. Warned, by the partial encounters of the 30th, of the presence of the enemy in considerable force in the direction of Vercelli, he may be excused for having supposed the movements of the Sardinian army to have been intended to divert his attention from a more formidable attack by the French in the opposite direction towards Pavia; but every competent judge must blame him for having adopted one of those half measures that almost invariably fail in war, though they sometimes succeed in other lines of human activity. While the Sardinians were fighting on May 30th, the *corps*

d'armée of Marshal Canrobert was engaged in their rear throwing bridges across the Sesia, in order to pass that river on the following day, intending to defile in the direction of Novara. The Austrian general had now a choice between two courses—either to reserve his strength for an apprehended attack on his left, and in that case merely to protect his position by leaving an adequate force at Mortara, or else to strike a heavy and rapid blow upon his assailants, and then withdraw his troops towards the point at which he apprehended danger. Having determined to attack the positions gained by the Piedmontese on the preceding day, he should not have hesitated to bring such an overpowering force into the field, on the morning of the 31st, as would have driven back the Piedmontese, and effectually separated them from Canrobert's corps, at the same time forcing back upon the Sesia the portion of the French army that had crossed to the left bank of that river. When double the number might have been brought to bear upon the enemy, the attack was made by General Zobel with a force of whom some 15,000 men may have been actually engaged, while, as the Sardinian bulletins assert, one or two brigades more may have been held in reserve. The Austrians were withheld by the vigour and gallantry of the Piedmontese and the Zouaves; they retired, as usual, in good order, but the object of the movement had failed, while their troops were dispirited by defeat.

The movements of the allied army upon the Ticino continued without intermission. Three bridges were thrown over the river at Turbigo, and the great stone bridge of Buffalora, which the Austrians failed effectually to blow up, fell into the power of the French on the 2nd of June, before Gyulay became aware of the true position of affairs. The 3rd was passed by the allies in preparation for the decisive encounter of the following day. The entire corps of General MacMahon was moved across the Ticino, leaving the Sardinians to follow on the next morning, while a force, of whose exact strength we are not informed, was held in readiness, under the direct command of the French Emperor, at the great bridge of Buffalora, which is the principal passage over the Ticino between Switzerland and Piedmont on the one side and Lombardy on the other.

The French and Sardinians were thus enabled without interruption to secure the passage of the frontier of Lombardy, and the Austrians prepared in hot haste to contest their further advance. On the 2nd, orders were despatched by General Gyulay, commanding the immediate return of his army to the left bank of the Ticino, the point to which they were all to converge being the village of Magenta, a small place about three miles from the

bridge of Buffalora, and the terminus of the railway from Milan.

We have learned from General Gyulay himself the exact positions of the several divisions of his army on the morning of the 4th of June. A portion of the 1st corps (Count Clam's), numbering 7000 men, with the second corps (Prince Lichtenstein's), occupied Magenta. The 3rd (Prince Schwarzenberg's) and the 7th (Baron Zobel's) were posted in neighbouring villages, in and near to the head-quarters at Abbiate Grasso, about four miles from Magenta. The 5th corps (Count Stadion's) was so distant that it did not arrive on the field till the evening, and few if any of its regiments were actually engaged. The 8th and 9th corps were altogether out of reach.

To compensate for the dispersion of a large portion of their force, the Austrians at Magenta held a position which, as against an enemy advancing from the bridge of Buffalora, is formidably strong. Near to the river the land is low and intersected by ditches. About a mile further east the ground rises steeply in a long escarpment, forming at some former geological period the ancient bank of the river. The nearly completed railway line and the high road to Milan, both crossing the bridge of Buffalora, are carried on high embankments across the marshy plain, and through the steep gravel banks by a broad cutting. They then meet the canal before spoken of, here running parallel to the river in a deep 30-feet wide trench, cut through the high land, the railway traversing it by an iron bridge, the road by a stone one. A second road, branching to the left from near the great bridge, leads to the village of Buffalora, where it likewise crosses the canal by a bridge.

If the Austrians at Magenta had been secure against a serious attack on their flank, the position was, indeed, one which should not have been abandoned without a desperate defence. The range of heights formed a great earthwork, and the canal in the rear a second line of defence so formidable, that with resolute troops it could have been defended against a very superior force advancing from the bridge of Buffalora. But in the mean time, as General Gyulay has admitted in his official report, he was aware that the French army had crossed the Ticino in force on the 3rd, some miles to the north of Magenta, and that a single Austrian division sent against them had been driven back. He knew that his own army was advancing from the southward, and that his men were exhausted by continual marching for the preceding thirty-six hours, that not more than half his troops could be brought to oppose the advancing columns of the French, and that no

adequate force could be detached to resist the advance of MacMahon. Lastly, the battle, which was to decide the occupation of Milan, if not of all Lombardy, was to be fought in a position where cavalry were practically useless, the low country being swampy, and the high land densely planted with mulberries and vines. It was under these circumstances that, on the morning of the 4th of June, the Austrian general determined to resist the further advance of the allied armies.

The details of the hard-fought battle of Magenta must be sifted from the contradictory statements received through various sources. The brilliant valour displayed by a portion of the French army is obscured by the mendacity of writers, official and amateur, who have attempted to persuade the world that 4000 Frenchmen had successfully contended against 125,000 Austrians. An account of the battle, marked by a remarkably clear and accurate description of the position so desperately contested, is contained in the 'Times' of the 13th of June and continued in the following day's number of that newspaper. If the writer has described the events of the battle as correctly as he has the ground on which it was fought, it seems clear that, however carefully the French emperor may have studied the art of war in the cabinet, his dispositions in the field were grievously defective, and that the escape of his army from disaster was due rather to good fortune than to military skill. Assuming him to have really directed the operations of both the allied armies, he is entitled to full credit for the well-planned and well-executed movements by which the right flank of the Austrian position was turned, and the mass of the French and Sardinian forces were successfully led to the banks of the Ticino, though that success was largely due to the feeble direction given to the Austrian army by his opponent. We cannot give the same praise to the operations conducted in the presence of the enemy.

From Turbigo, where the corps of MacMahon passed the Ticino, to the bridge of Buffalora, the river describes a curve, concave towards Piedmont, convex on the side of Lombardy: the country near the river is rough, swampy, and covered with wood, so that the only practicable road by which an army could advance from Turbigo upon the Austrian position at Magenta lies two or three miles inland, and on the eastern side of the Naviglio Grande, a wide and deep canal which is destined to irrigate a large portion of western Lombardy. On the right bank the distance from Buffalora to Turbigo is about five miles but by the longer curve on the Lombard side the distance (as stated, and probably correctly, in the 'Times' letter) is not less than twelve miles by a narrow country road.

This distance is too great to insure unity and precision in the operations of large masses of troops acting on opposite sides of a river. Supposing that no eligible point for effecting a passage could have been selected nearer than Turbigo, it remains to be explained why the troops of General MacMahon were not advanced on the 3rd of June some portion of the way towards Magenta, so as to be available early on the following day, and to enable the Sardinian army to take a share in the conflict. Whether the error, if it was one, was due to a mistake of General MacMahon or to superior orders, it is certain that the result of the battle on the 4th was seriously compromised by the difficulty of bringing MacMahon's corps at the proper time to bear upon the intended point of attack.

At two o'clock in the afternoon, according to the French account—at mid-day, if the Austrian bulletin and the writer in the 'Times' be correct—the cannon of General MacMahon heard on the left announced the approach of his troops to attack the right flank of the Austrians. The moment was come for the co-operation of the French corps who held the bridge of Buffalora. A regiment of Grenadiers of the Imperial Guard, another of Zouaves of the Guard, and a section of Horse Artillery—in all less than 4000 men—were sent against the front of the Austrian position, while another regiment assailed the village of Buffalora.

The French attack was made with that vigour and rapidity for which their troops are distinguished. The heights were stormed and the two bridges over the canal fell into the power of the French, either because their rapid advance left no time to blow them up, or because proper preparation had not been made to do so. Meanwhile MacMahon's advance had been delayed; and although a large part of the Austrian force was engaged against him, the assailants in their position on the canal were exposed to the attack of greatly superior forces. Alone and unsupported, for two hours this small French force held its ground against the desperate efforts of successive bodies of troops which the Austrians flung against them; and it was not till they were nearly overpowered that additional men were brought to sustain their failing strength. Had they been driven back or annihilated the result of the day must have been disastrous for the French army. The whole force of the Austrians would have been turned upon MacMahon, who could scarcely have recrossed the Ticino in the face of a vastly superior force without suffering severe loss. From this danger Louis Napoleon was extricated by the admirable valour the picked troops forming the regiments of the Guard; but

if he continues unnecessarily to squander the lives of the flower of his army, he may find the want of them to his cost before the close of the campaign.

In reading the French official account of the battle it is impossible not to perceive that, in regard to this critical portion of the proceedings, the writer is designedly obscure. It is not conceivable that any general would venture to attack such a position as that held by the Austrians before Magenta, with no more than a single division, unless he had a considerable force at hand to support the movement. The emperor, or his amanuensis, speaks vaguely of the delays encountered by the division of General Espinasse and the corps of Marshal Canrobert, but no hint is given as to the amount of the force available at the moment when the attack was commenced. The reader is tempted to urge the dilemma—why was not a sufficient force brought to the *tête de pont* at San Martino during the two preceding days?—or, if such a force was at hand, why were the Grenadiers and Zouaves left for two hours without support?

On both sides the battle was fought in a way which, at the risk of being thought pedantic, we hold to be opposed to sound military principles. If, under the most favourable conditions mere chance—events independent of the will of the commanders—have a large share in deciding the fate of battle, it is to subordinate Mars and Minerva completely to blind Fortune, to risk the fate of empires upon battles in which the troops are marched from various and distant quarters under circumstances in which it is unsafe to calculate upon the co-operation of any two considerable masses, and a general combined movement becomes utterly impossible.

To this criticism the Austrian is more liable than the French commander. To the latter the passage of the Ticino was an important strategical object, to be secured as soon as possible with or without the cost of a battle. The former knew that the position of Magenta had lost its value from the moment that it was liable to be assailed in flank from the northward, at the same time as by an enemy in front. There cannot, we conceive, be a doubt among competent judges that he should have directed the corps under Clam to fall back gradually from Magenta, concentrated his dispersed forces, rested and fed his troops, and prepared on the following day to give battle to the enemy, on ground selected and prepared for the encounter.

It is scarcely safe to draw any general conclusion from the events of the present campaign, but they certainly tend to the impression, that although the Austrian troops show great steadiness under

fire, and remarkable solidity in retreat, they have not proved themselves, man for man, equal to the French or Piedmontese who have been opposed to them. Whether the result would be different if the scene were changed, and they were fighting in a cause for which they could feel any genuine enthusiasm, is a question which we do not wish to see answered, as it is our hope that the present war will have Italy as its limit, and that neither Tyrolese nor Bohemian may be called upon to defend his native soil against a foreign invader.

There is one feature in the late battle which ought to inspire more anxiety in the friends of Austria than any of the ordinary losses which an army sustains in the field. This is the circumstance of some considerable number of men having laid down their arms on the day of Magenta, after making little more than a show of defence. Of the fact we believe that there can be no reasonable doubt; but whether or not these nominal prisoners—more properly deserters—who fell into the hands of the French include Hungarians as well as Italians, is a point as to which we have no positive evidence. It must be not the smallest among the anxieties that press on the Emperor Francis Joseph to know, that even in the ranks of that army to which he looks for the safety of his throne, the military spirit by which it is animated is unable to repress the deep disaffection of a large portion of the people of his empire.

With the entry of the French and Piedmontese into Milan, the retreat of the Austrians, and their abandonment of Pavia, Piacenza, and Lodi, the first act of the campaign closes. We may assume that the second will open upon the banks of the Mincio; and that although Count Schlick has been substituted for Gyulay, and the Emperor is said to have assumed the command over the entire of the Austrian forces, the real direction will rest with General Hess. In attempting to foresee the future proceedings of the belligerents, it is impossible not to perceive that this is in great measure determined by the course which they have already pursued. It may not be uninteresting to speculate for a moment upon the turn which the campaign might have taken if the contending generals had adopted a different system.

While we doubt that any considerable military results were within the reach of the Austrian general invading Piedmont, we have already intimated our opinion, that if he had led his army at once to the right bank of the Po, merely occupying the Lomellina by detachments of light troops, he would have been better placed for gaining some partial successes at the outset of the campaign; and that as soon as the allied armies were in a

position to attempt to enter Lombardy, the frontier should have been guarded from within rather than from without. With an unbroken Austrian army well posted on the west side of the Ticino, between Binasco and Gallarate, the attempt to cross that river would have exposed the allies to far more serious danger than that which they actually incurred.

Apart from the merit of its execution, we doubt whether the design of turning the right flank of the Austrians deserves all the praise which it has received. It is at least questionable, whether, with a different strategic plan, more important results might not have been as surely effected in the same or a shorter time. Having the command of the sea, it would have been as easy to carry the French troops and munitions of war to Spezia as to Genoa. Supposing Alessandria effectually secured from attack, the movement of the Austrian army into Piedmont would only have led more surely to its ruin, if a French army of superior strength had been thrown into Lombardy between the Mincio and the Adda, before the army of Marshal Gvulav had been able to return to the secure refuge of the Mincio. From Spezia to Casal Maggiore on the Po is little more than eighty miles; and the good carriage road, by Pontremoli and Parma, would serve for the transport of heavy artillery; while mountain roads, which in 1799 sufficed for the passage of Macdonald's army, would now afford a passage to a large part of the French force. Admitting that the attempt would not have been free from risk, the greatness of the result would seem to justify an attempt which might at one blow have decided the result of the war. Even if anticipated at the passage of the Po, the French would not have incurred any very serious danger; while the Austrian army, if their antagonists were once established in Lombardy between them and the Mincio, would have had to choose between fighting a pitched battle, or retreating into the Tyrol by the Val Tellina, or the Val Camonica. In the first case, they might have found another Marengo, in a country where every town would have been closed against the fugitives: in the second, the French would have advanced upon the line of the Mincio and the Adige, at a time when the greater part of the force that should have opposed them would be engaged in a long and harassing march, through a country chiefly hostile, and extremely barren of resources. At present, in spite of the uniform success of the allies, they have gained little positive advantage beyond the political object of entering Milan and clearing the larger part of Lombardy of the presence of the Austrians. The latter have lost a good many troops in battle, and an equal or greater number taken prisoners on the day of

Magenta; but from the first cause the loss of the allies is not much less than that of the Austrians, who are retiring, defeated but not dispirited, on the Mincio.

The celebrated position which is to form the scene of the next portion of the campaign is well known to all readers of military history; but it may be interesting to consider it anew, with reference to the present conditions of war, and the designs and prospects of the belligerents.

In the chain of the Alps, between the Mediterranean and the Adriatic, there is but one great opening that gives ready access to the plains of Northern Italy. From the time of the first inroads of Gothic tribes into Italy, to the present day, when Austrian troops are carried by railway from Botzen to Verona, the valley of the Adige has been the main highway of the northern invader. Travelling up the stream, nearly due north, for about ninety miles, from Verona to Botzen, we come to the confluence of two tributary valleys. Ascending gradually, by an excellent road, along the western branch—the Upper Adige or Etsch—we arrive at some small lakes which are regarded as the sources of that river, and then commence an easy descent, which leads through the gorge of the Finisternünz into the main valley of the German Alps, that of the Inn. The Eisack, flowing from the eastward, which joins the Adige at Botzen, passes through a deep narrow defile between that place and Brixen, from whence two roads diverge, the one towards the east leading to Villack in Carinthia, the other by the Brenner to Innsbruck. Thus three different roads from Germany, lower and less difficult than any others crossing the chain of the Alps, all converge in the valley of the Adige.

Owing to the systematic encouragement given by the Austrian Government to the construction of new roads through the valleys of the Alps, the plains of Italy may be reached by six different routes all diverging from the Adige, without counting the main line of road and railway, whose terminus is at Verona. First, there is the road of the Stelvio, carried from the upper valley of the Adige, near its source, over the highest pass in Europe yet made passable for carriages, through the long Val Tellina, to the eastern shores of the Lake of Como. Next to this, a line of road, lately completed, diverges to the westward about ten miles north of Trent, and crosses the Tonale Pass into the Val Camonica, descending into Lombardy between Bergamo and Brescia. The third road passes due east from Trent to Castel Doblino; from thence follows the narrow defile of the Sarca to Tione, and then descends over a low pass to the Lago d'Idro, and along the banks of the Chiese to the plain of Lombardy

near Lonato, through the ground on which, in the beginning of August 1796, the first Napoleon defeated with such marvellous promptitude and skill the superior forces by which the Austrian generals attempted to surround and overwhelm him. The fourth of the roads diverging from the Adige, passes from Roveredo by Riva, and along the vertical precipices that hem in the upper end of the Lake of Garda, through the Val di Ledro, and joins the last route at the Lake of Idro. A fifth route ascends from Trent towards the east, and after gaining the level of the Lake of Caldonazzo, descends along the stern defile of the Brenta to Bassano and the plain of Venice; while the sixth and last goes direct from Roveredo to Vicenza by an easy pass, carried between the almost inaccessible dolomite peaks at the head of the Val Arsa and the Val dei Signori.

Having traced the various branches through which the main artery communicates on the north with the German provinces of Austria, and in the opposite direction with the Italian valleys of the Alps, let us examine a little more closely the lower portion of the channel by which the waters of the Adige are poured out into the plain. Below Roveredo, whence, as we have mentioned, the roads to Riva and to Vicenza diverge on either hand, the valley is shut in on both sides by limestone mountains. It is separated from the parallel valley of the Lake of Garda by the steep ridge of Monte Baldo, the last outlier of the Alps. For nearly twenty miles this barrier stretches with a nearly uniform height, sloping precipitously towards the lake, but terraced by intervening plateaux towards the Adige; southwards, however, it falls away in long slopes and undulations, forming an irregular hilly district a good deal higher than the lake or the river which bound it on either side. The high road and the railway are carried along the left bank of the river, but another road, practicable for artillery, runs along the right bank to the south of Roveredo. Where the river emerges from the Alps into the hilly district at their base, the rocks close on both sides upon the stream in the defile of La Chiusa. The road of the right bank, forced to quit the Adige, ascends by zig-zags to the famous plateau of Rivoli; on the opposite side, the high road, partly excavated in the rock, keeps nearer to the river, until the country, opening out on every side, enables it to pass direct from Volargne towards Verona, a distance of fourteen miles. The plateau of Rivoli, so desperately contested in 1796 between the French and the Austrians, owes its importance to a bend of the Adige at its base, the effect of which is, that the roads on both sides of the river, and the railway, for a distance of a mile, are completely commanded; so that an enemy having established

his batteries in that position can interrupt the direct communications between the garrison of Verona and the Tyrol, and command the passage of the river at that part of its course. But the hills on the east side of the Adige rise considerably above the level of the plateau, and upon these a series of forts has been constructed, formidable in appearance, which are said not only to command the road, but also the plateau of Rivoli. Lower down, the hills on the left bank of the Adige retire from the neighbourhood of the river, which approaches within four miles of the Lake of Garda, from which it is separated by the heights on which stand the villages of Pastrengo and Santa Giustina. This position is perhaps of more real importance than that of Rivoli: held by a sufficient force it is almost unassailable, and an army attacking Verona must attach extreme importance to its occupation.

If the valley of the Adige must be regarded as the main portal of the Alps, through which, for purposes of war or commerce—for the destruction or the increase of the fruits of human industry—the tide of intercourse between the North and the South must constantly pass, Verona must be regarded as the master-key. A long line of steep hills, projecting like a promontory from the Tyrolese Alps towards the plain, falls towards the Adige, which winds sinuously round its base in the shape of the letter S turned towards the north. The larger part of the town lies to the south of the river, and without the walls is a fortified camp, protected by detached forts. On the north rise terraces and villas, and lines of cypresses, and among them vast casemated barracks; then, further up, tier upon tier of forts, frowning down upon the beautiful city. Lower down the Adige, about twenty miles by road, but much more by the windings of the river, is Legnago, a strong fortress; south of which, between the Adige and the Po, is the great marshy district called the Valli grandi Veronesi. The Adige, having at first flowed to the south-east, so as gradually to approach the Po, here becomes parallel to that river, and proceeds nearly due east to the Adriatic, at an average distance of ten or twelve miles from the Po, the intervening space being traversed by numerous streams and canals. For the greater part of its course, and all the way from Legnago to the sea, the Adige is restrained from inundating the low country on either bank by massive dykes (*argini*) that rise considerably above the level of the surrounding plains. These, although in parts marshy, are not uniformly so. They are traversed by one considerable line of road—that which leads from Padua by Monselice and Rovigo to Ferrara or to Modena.

The line of the Mincio derives its importance, not from any

great degree of intrinsic strength, but from its position with reference to the Adige. On the Lake of Garda, about fifteen miles from Verona, at the point where the river leaves the lake, is Peschiera, a fortress originally of moderate dimensions, but greatly strengthened by the Austrians since 1848. Unlike the Adige, the Mincio is a feeble and shallow stream, fordable in many places,¹ and traversed by a stone bridge at Goito, where the first encounter between the Piedmontese and the Austrians took place in 1848, and where a more serious engagement, honourable to the troops of both armies, followed on the 30th May following. Twenty miles south of Peschiera is the famous fortress of Mantua, surrounded on three sides by a reedy lake, formed by the enlargement of the Mincio, and on the south by an impassable swamp. It is approached by causeways, on one of which, guarded by a strong *tête de pont*, the road communicating with Verona and Peschiera crosses the lake. Against artillery such as has been hitherto brought to bear upon it, Mantua is held to be impregnable; but the advantage of its strength is greatly diminished by the peculiarity of its position, which enables a comparatively small force to blockade it. An army once become master of the country between the Mincio and the Adige may easily, by a single division, cut off a superior force shut up in Mantua from taking part in operations against the line of the Adige. A few miles below Mantua the Mincio joins the Po, here become a wide river, sometimes deep and rapid, sometimes broken by sandbanks and low islands. From thence to the marshy delta, where it divides into a dozen arms, the Po is confined between massive *argini*, even higher and more solid than the dykes that restrain the current of the Adige.

¹ It is said that the Austrian engineers have contrived a system of dams and sluices, by which they can retain at will the waters of the Lake of Garda, and suddenly let them loose, so as to sweep away any temporary bridges thrown across the Mincio by an enemy's army. The design is ingenious, and so long as they hold the outlet of the lake at Peschiera there is no way of preventing them from putting it into execution. But there is no reason to suppose that the effect can be very formidable. A careful inquiry as to the result of closing the outlet of the Rhone at Geneva has led to the conclusion that in the summer season the rise of the lake would be less than six inches in twenty-four hours. The area of the Lake of Garda is not much less than that of the Lake of Geneva, while the supply of water from the Sarca, the Toscolano, and some minor torrents, can be scarcely a third of that which is poured into the latter lake. The daily rise at Peschiera, supposing the outlet of the Mincio completely barred, could scarcely exceed three inches, and it would take a considerable time to procure such a reserve as would make the Mincio when let loose again, a formidable barrier. The operation could perhaps be executed once with effect, but could not easily be repeated.

Such is the position which the Austrians have prepared, with every resource of modern science, and with a profuse expenditure of labour and money, to hold against the long-apprehended attack now directed against them. An army marching from the west across the plains of Lombardy, between the Po and the Alps, encounters first the line of the Mincio, defended at each extremity by the fortresses of Peschiera and Mantua. Behind these, on the line of the Adige, are Verona and Legnago. The quadrangle between them is large enough to leave space for the movements of a great army, yet too contracted for such manœuvres as those that lately enabled the allied troops to reach the Ticino without striking a blow. By the Adige, Verona is connected directly by road, railway, and telegraph with the Tyrol, the true citadel of Austrian power; while the main line of communication with the capital of the monarchy passes due east by Vicenza, Padua, Treviso, and Friuli.

This is the stronghold from which Louis Napoleon and Victor Emmanuel have undertaken to drive the Austrian emperor. Each of the monarchs brings to the encounter all his disposable military force, aided by the utmost means and appliances which modern science has evoked in aid of the dreadful art of war. As compared with those famous campaigns in which the French and Austrians of a past generation contended on the same fields, or even with that of 1848, in which Sardinia, almost unaided, struggled against Austria, then in her period of utmost weakness, the conditions are greatly altered. On each side the armies are far more numerous, and it may be presumed that the weapons have been made more sure and deadly in their effect. As yet it is true that we have seen but small indications of any great results from the new artillery brought into the field. In the approaching trial against the Austrian fortresses we shall soon learn whether the continental engineers have achieved any instrument of destruction at all comparable to the Armstrong gun. But irrespective of the resources available at the moment of conflict, the conditions of the attack and the defence, regarded as purely strategical problems, have been materially altered, even since the campaign of 1848. Of the six lateral roads communicating between the valley of the Adige and the plains of Upper Italy, three have been completed and made fit for the passage of troops within the last five or six years. The electric telegraph has been generally introduced and made available in a variety of ways. Lastly, a railway has been constructed across the front of the Austrian line of defence, extending between the Mincio and the Adige from Verona to Mantua.

At the first view of the matter these new conditions seem to be more favourable to the defenders than to the assailants. It is true that past experience seems to show that against a competent general an attack upon his flank or rear by an isolated corps, acting at a distance from the main army opposed to him, is not likely to expose him to serious danger, and may prove fatal to his opponents. Before these lines are in print a great portion of the allied forces may be marching over the ground between Lonato, Montechiaro, and Castiglione, whereon the Austrian generals in August, 1796, attempted to surround and overwhelm the first Napoleon. Quasdanovitsch, with a force of 20,000 men, had descended by the Val Sabbia from the northward, while Bayalitsch and Liptai, with 25,000, advanced from Verona, and Wurmser, with 15,000, from Mantua, against the French army of scarcely 30,000 men. On this, as on many other great occasions, Napoleon concentrated his troops in a central position, and employed his whole force to beat, one after the other, the opponents that were leagued for his destruction. On the 1st of August, Quasdanovitsch was driven back into the valleys of the Brescian Alps; on the 3rd Bayalitsch and Liptai were routed at Lonato; and on the 5th the defeat at Castiglione of Wurmser, reinforced by the remains of the divisions of his two lieutenants, completed the destruction of the Austrian army. It may, however, be doubted whether the objections to the plan of operations then adopted by the Austrians may not be much diminished by the introduction of the electric telegraph. Although the corps of Quasdanovitsch was at a distance of many days' march from Verona, if Wurmser, when prepared to advance, had been able to learn their exact position, to direct their movements from day to day, and to time their attack against the enemy so as to coincide with his own movements, it may be doubted whether the marvellous career of Napoleon would not have been cut short, or strangely altered, at the very moment when his military genius was most conspicuously exhibited. With regard, however, to the applicability of the electric telegraph to the operations of the Austrians during the present campaign, it is very doubtful whether they could rely on that mode of communication anywhere in the valleys about the Lake of Garda, where the feelings of the population are much more hostile than in the plains of Lombardy and Venice. The application must depend on circumstances; but the power of this new engine cannot in these days be left out of the calculations of a commander.

It is the opinion of many competent judges that, for the general purposes of war, railways are far less important than

they would appear to be on a superficial view. The amount of transport required to convey a great army, with trains of baggage, stores, and ammunition—for all which the necessary number of horses, waggons, &c., must in any case be provided—is so enormous that the resources of a railway line are altogether inadequate, even where the available supply of engines, carriages, and trucks is vastly greater than is the case upon any of the continental lines. Competent judges declare that an army of 100,000 men could be moved from London to Brighton in much less time by road alone, than by railway alone. But this does not prove that railways may not play a most important part in warfare, as auxiliary means of transport in the general movements of an army, and still more in the execution of rapid movements in the presence of the enemy.

Twice in the present campaign we have seen a railway used to bring up troops from the rear to defend a position against the advance of an enemy's corps. At Montebello it enabled the French to convert a partial encounter between the advanced corps of the two armies into a serious engagement, in which they were able to inflict a blow upon their opponents. At Turbigo an insufficient Austrian force (a single division it is said) were enabled to arrive by railway from Milan in time to offer an ineffectual opposition to the establishment of MacMahon's force on the left bank of the Ticino. Had the Austrian army been placed in a proper position to defend the frontier of Lombardy, with a reserve at or near Milan, it cannot be doubted that at the decisive moment the railway from Milan to Magenta would have played an important part in strengthening their means of resistance to the advance of the allied armies.

Far more important for strategical purposes, as we believe, is a railway running parallel to the front of operations, than one placed in the direction of the line of advance. We know that the possession of such a line from Alessandria to Vercelli on the west side of the Sesia materially aided the recent operations of the allied armies. The Sardinian official bulletin has told us that the infantry of Canrobert's corps were by this means carried in a few hours from the banks of the Po to Prarolo—far on the right flank of the Austrians—where they were to cross the Sesia; and we may presume that the same means were employed to hasten the movements of the other divisions of the French army. The power of thus rapidly transferring a large force of fresh troops from one point to another of an extended line is evidently a formidable weapon in the hands of a skilful commander. The advantage enjoyed by the allies in their movements behind the Sesia will be transferred to General Hess

when they prepare to attack him on the Mincio; and the possibility of having a very large force transferred within a few hours from Verona to any point in the line between that and Mantua, at the pleasure of their opponent, must tend to inspire a degree of caution in their movements that will be irksome to the impetuous activity of the French army.

It would be rash to indulge in conjectures as to the precise operations of the contending armies, which may easily be falsified before these pages reach the reader. A few points, however, may fairly be taken for granted. The Austrians have a few lightly-armed steamers on the Lake of Garda; it will be indispensable for the allies to deprive them of the command of that lake; and it may be presumed that certain gunboats, constructed (as it is said) so as to be taken to pieces and put together again at will, are destined for this service. Their armament will probably be sufficient to tell with effect against Peschiera and against some minor forts on the eastern Garda shore; and it may be supposed that in their construction the liability of the lake to sudden and violent squalls has not been forgotten. Peschiera being taken or invested, it is safe to foretell that the positions of Rivoli and Pastrengo will be the next object of attack. It may be found that the forts lately erected on the left bank of the Adige have rendered the first position untenable; but we are not informed that the Austrians have made any defences which would make Pastrengo unassailable by a French force advancing from Castelnovo, and from Lazise on the Lake of Garda. This brings us to consider the capital question, upon which the whole future operations of the allies should be made to turn. Assuming that the Austrians are driven back after a battle fought upon either side of the Mincio, or that they retire before the advance of the allies without serious resistance, and supposing that the new works at Peschiera are unable to hold against the formidable artillery which will be brought against them, can Verona be reduced, or the line of the Adige forced, by an army moving from the Mincio? To that question we hazard a negative reply. It must be recollected that the direct line of the valley of the Adige is but one of the roads by which Verona is connected with the Tyrol. The road to Vicenza leads not only to Vienna, but, by a slight detour through the Val dei Signori, to Roveredo; and, if that town were occupied by the enemy, a somewhat longer circuit through Bassano leads to Trent. The famous plateau of Rivoli, therefore, even if securely held, does no more than interrupt one of the issues on which the defenders of Verona rely, nor would the power of crossing the Adige at that part of its course avail much to the

assailants. The only road passable for artillery, or better than a rough mountain-track, by which the city can be approached along the left bank, lies under the concentrated fire of its accumulated defences. The notion of attempting to cross the Adige between Legnago and Verona cannot be seriously maintained. Even while he held Verona, the operation, when executed by Napoleon before the battle of Arcola, was full of difficulty and danger. An attack on Legnago might possibly be successful if Mantua were effectually blockaded, and a sufficient force kept in the field to prevent the Austrians in Verona from making a dangerous effort against the rear of the allies; but even supposing Legnago taken, it appears to us that the position of an army attempting to advance into the Venetian provinces, with two such fortresses as Verona and Mantua in their rear, would be exposed to such extreme risk that that alternative may safely be dismissed.

Most of the writers on the campaigns of 1796 and 1799 have repeated the opinion of Jomini, that the attempt to force the line of the Adige below Legnago is altogether inadmissible; and that the danger of a reverse to an army advancing upon the Venetian territory from the lower course of the Po and the Adige, would be so extreme as to deter any prudent general from encountering it. Having regard to the present conditions of war, we venture to advocate the opposite opinion, and to hold that the true direction in which to attack with success the Austrian position in Italy is from the south, by the way of Bologna and Modena, or from the latter only, if the neutrality of the Roman States were admitted. The political changes that have already occurred in Tuscany and the Duchies have had the important effect of giving to the French a secure base of operations at Leghorn. Three lines of road lead from Tuscany into the Modenese territory, and two to Bologna. The passage of a broad river like the Po, confined between dykes that rise above the level of the neighbouring country, and furnished with roads running along the banks, simply depends upon establishing a superiority in artillery on the raised banks of the river. If the French rifled cannon, of which so much has been said, are of any real value, they should be able to sweep the opposite bank of the Po, so that the passage of the river should be not only practicable, but quite undisturbed. Having the command of the sea, it may be supposed that the French will not fail to occupy the lower course of the Po with a force of gunboats which would not only sustain any operations on the course of the river, but cover the retreat of their army in the event of a reverse. How far such gunboats could penetrate amongst the network of canals that

traverse the tract east of Rovigo, between the Po and the Adige, we are unable to say; but there seems to be no reason why that district may not be so fully occupied and defended by the French, that even in case of their being forced to retreat, it would be difficult for the Austrians to pursue them with advantage. It is worthy of note, that in advancing by this line, an army, while between the Po and the Adige, would be covered on its left flank by the great marshes of the Valli Grandi Veronesi.

Assuming that we have shown that an army supported from the sea may with perfect safety enter the Venetian territory by the route of Rovigo and Padua, we may recur to our previous observations as to the use of the electric telegraph in war. Through Milan, Piacenza, Modena, Ferrara, and Padua, the commander-in-chief, whether present with the army of the Po, or that occupying the line of the Mincio and resting on Peschiera, would be kept constantly informed of all that passed at each extremity of this wide chain; and, whether for purposes of attack or defence, would be enabled to combine the movements of the two distant armies in a manner hitherto utterly impracticable in war. If our views be correct, the army advancing from the south should be considered as the principal force on whose operations the fate of the campaign would mainly turn; and the chief object of the auxiliary force on the right bank of the Adige should be to hold the positions of Pastrengo and Rivoli, and thus close the direct line of communications between Verona and the Tyrol, co-operating, of course, in whatever decisive movements should be directed against the line of the Adige, at and below that city.

Thus far we have discussed the past proceedings and future prospects of the powers now contending on the fields of northern Italy, without reference to any other considerations than those that arise from the abstract study of the art of war. We have forbidden ourselves to remember that the soldiers who slaughtered each other in heaps at Magenta were men; that the flying crowd amongst whom at Malegnano General Forey poured '120 canisters of 80 balls each,' had been torn from happy homes, perhaps in the green valleys of Styria, or on the wide plains of the Lower Danube, to fight in a cause of which they knew and cared nothing; we have taken no thought of the mothers, and wives, and children, now mourning throughout a wide tract of Europe, from the Atlantic to Transylvania; but we have not been able altogether to suppress all recollection of the country which is the scene of this war. Men must die in battle, and those who love them must weep, but that is not all. On the ground where they fall what further misery is left to the

people whose fate it is to dwell in the track of the conqueror, or the defeated foe, no one ever cares to record. We hear of villages contested house by house, and left a mere mass of ruin and carnage, but no one thinks of asking what becomes of the villagers. Every day bridges are blown up, houses levelled and burned, destruction spread around; and when the noise of the war has grown still, all this will be felt for many a year by the quiet population who were strangers to the contest. In all Europe, except perhaps some parts of our own country, there is none where man, and the fruits of man's industry accumulated through succeeding generations, are packed together into so narrow a space as in Lombardy. Nowhere can war be more destructive. And then the land is so beautiful that it is impossible not to feel something at the thought of its being thus defaced. An enemy marching through Prussia, or Burgundy, or Poland, might cause much human misery, but he could scarcely leave the country uglier than he found it. But when we think of the slopes of Monte Baldo, and the hills around Verona, of the terraced gardens around the villa, of the trellised vines and bright flowers surrounding the house of the countryman—all so soon to be devastated with fire and slaughter—we cannot but feel a greater horror than before for the dreadful means by which nations, called civilized and Christian, decide their controversies. We are forward to admit that, in spite of all this, if the result of the war be to give freedom and independence and good government to the people of Italy, they will cheaply purchase such blessings at the price of much present suffering; but we not the less anxiously look around for whatever slight indications there may be that the general spread of education, and some diminution of national prejudices and antipathies, will hereafter make the task of commencing war more difficult to the rulers of mankind.

P.S.—It would seem that the downfall of Austria has been decreed, for her rulers have lost their senses. A few days ago the Emperor of Austria had offered to him the choice between two alternatives, for each of which some valid arguments might be offered. He could either withdraw his army at once within that quadrangle which is described in the foregoing pages, and there try the skill and patience of his assailants; or else give them battle upon a field which he was free to select beforehand, and where he might have secured for himself many natural and artificial advantages. The stand made by his retreating army after they passed the river Chiese, and the defensive works

thrown up about Monte Chiaro, showed that, for a time, the second alternative had been adopted. Of a sudden we learned that the positions so selected and prepared had been abandoned: it was then certain that the more cautious and politic course had prevailed. No one, either among the friends or the enemies of Austria, could have imagined that after retiring from the spot where he might have confronted the allies with advantage, Francis Joseph would have delivered himself into their hands by forsaking his second and wiser resolution, and adopting a third course, utterly without adequate motive or excuse. A battle has been fought, which, if we consider the numbers engaged, and the sacrifice of human life, has been perhaps the greatest of a century which saw the career of the first Napoleon; and the consequences can scarcely fail to hasten, if they do not immediately decide the result of the campaign.

